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Discovering the Leader Within: An Autoethnophenomenographic Study of Mindfulness in Educational Leadership

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Discovering the Leader Within:
An Autoethnophenomenographic Study of Mindfulness in Educational Leadership

A Dissertation Presented

by

Alyssa D. Fraser

Submitted to the Graduate School of Education

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Educational Leadership Specialization

Discovering the Leader Within:

An Autoethnophenomenographic Study of Mindfulness in Educational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study combined autoethnographic and phenomenological methods to examine a researcher-leader's attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational, and emotional capacities through regular mindfulness practice, and how the cultivation of such capacities aligns with the enactment of leadership. The interrogation of lived experience and self-analysis was entered with the intention to better understand the promise of mindfulness as a resource for the development of educational leaders. This study explored the perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the enactment of educational leadership by examining internal and external perspectives of an individual leader's practice. Methods of self-observation, including both interval and occurrence recording techniques as well as retrospective journaling, were applied for a six-month period, at the close of which external feedback through a 360° leadership assessment was collected. The analysis found that the practice of mindfulness became an embedded part of the researcher-leader's way of thinking and being and contributed to her ability to meet the demands of her professional role. This study also found that the understanding of the self, encouraged by mindfulness practice, assisted in the development of the researcher-leader's internal capacities, which promoted continual adaptation of external capacities. Increased attention toward renewal and replenishment, increased ability to respond to issues with less reactivity, increased attunement with others, and an expanding ability to take in other perspectives were identified within the researcher-leader's experience as benefits of her mindfulness practice that had positive effects on her enactment of leadership. Finally, the analysis found that the self-identified areas of strength and growth recognized by the researcher-leader were mirrored in the strengths and areas for growth recognized by colleagues. This study suggests that mindfulness practice may support leaders in their development as continually

evolving professionals and human beings. This has implications for leader development programs, suggesting that the integration of mindfulness practices into leadership programs may offer a more supportive and effective learning process for developing practitioners. Additional questions regarding the personal and contextual factors that support or inhibit mindful leadership, the potential risks of introducing mindfulness to leadership, and the potential for autographic methods to support the professional growth of leaders must still be explored.

Key words: mindfulness, leadership, education, leader development, lived experience

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION



The ensō is a symbol from Zen Buddhism that expresses many ideas. It speaks to the imperfection and connectedness that are inherent aspects of human existence. The open circle communicates that everything is part of something greater than itself. The symbol also communicates that the path of life's journey never reaches a destination, but continues infinitely. The hand-drawn, one brushstroke circle is believed to leave its creator fully exposed at one particular moment in time, expressing a moment when the mind is free. This symbol represents being, becoming and connectedness, and depicts a manifestation of the present moment (Seo, 2007). It is a visual representation which succinctly expresses the topic of this research: examining the being, becoming and connectedness of an educational leader in a particular context, in a particular moment in time.

This is a qualitative study of a researcher-leader's attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice, investigating how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership. This study emerged from a recognized lack of detail in the research concerning the relationship between mindfulness and leadership behaviors, development and outcomes (Reb, Sim, Chintakananda, & Bhave, 2015; Verdorfer, 2016). The interrogation of the lived experience and self-analysis of a leader's cognitions, emotions, relationships and practice is offered herein as precondition to

understanding the promise of mindfulness as a resource for fundamental change (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015). Such detail is needed for new knowledge to be constructed regarding the complexity of educational leadership and the potential for mindfulness practice to support leaders in navigating this complexity.

Statement of the Problem

At this point in time, leaders in all domains face complex challenges and destabilizing change (Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013). Calls for change and improvement abound (Wells, 2013, 2015), increasing the work intensity and high-stakes climate of many organizations, schools particularly. In a context plagued by continual and unpredictable changes, the demands on the educational leader are tremendous (Leithwood, 2005; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Educational leaders are tasked with the responsibility of producing change (Hallinger, 2003; Kotter, March-April 1995), a responsibility which demands skills such as creating vision, influencing others, building relationships, communicating effectively, supporting capacity building, and establishing a harmonious culture (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2009; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2006).

Despite the shift from a managerial perspective of leadership to a change perspective of leadership evident in the literature, there remains a tendency to describe leadership as a functional role, as a means of accomplishing activities and mastering routines, rather than as the relational role it has become (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Northouse, 2016). Educational leaders aspire to influence other people's motivation, knowledge and practices in order to facilitate teaching and learning (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015). Educational leadership is a profession in which building trust and communicating effectively are essential (Bryk & Schneider, 1996, March

2003; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). A body of evidence suggests it is the personal, affective dispositions that incline leaders to engage in effective leadership practices and that social-emotional competence has a strong relationship with leadership success (Leithwood et al., 2006).

While research in educational leadership practice has grown tremendously in recent years, the understanding of how theory effectively becomes practice is lacking (Robinson, 2010). Theories have declared the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for effective leadership and often describe the role in this way, outlining specific actions that leadership demands (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2015; Hallinger, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Heifetz & Linksky, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2008; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Yukl, 1989). Yet, understanding which skills the role of educational leader demands is not the same as understanding how to cultivate these capacities. There is a difference between *doing* tasks associated with leadership and *being* a leader (Wells, 2015).

Leadership development most often involves teaching leadership concepts, frameworks and theories, but rarely focuses on teaching individuals how to learn leadership, or how to develop themselves as leaders as they go through challenging experiences on the job (Ashford & DeRue, 2012). Although leadership clearly involves personal and interpersonal skills, such skills are largely ignored in leadership development, or are addressed in theory without discussion of the day-to-day practical application, making it challenging for leaders to acquire and develop these skills (Baron, 2016). As one example, Authentic Leadership literature clearly identifies awareness as a key ingredient of effective leadership, yet is relatively silent as to how leaders can develop awareness (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015).

How and why leaders exert positive influence in their school communities continues to linger as a question for researchers (George, 2000). Robinson (2010) notes, “Learning to lead is not about mastering a long list of capabilities. It is about learning to draw upon and integrate appropriate cognitive and emotional resources in context-sensitive and relevant ways” (p. 23). Mindfulness practices have been demonstrated to positively influence cognitive and emotional skills (Baer, 2003; K. W. Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007b; Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004; Gu, Cavanagh, & Strauss, 2015; Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt, & Oh, 2010; Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011; Sauer & Kohls, 2011; Venkatasubramanian & Dorjee, 2011; Verdorfer, 2016) and are beginning to be connected to leadership development.

Recent literature has suggested mindfulness practices have the potential to contribute to leadership effectiveness (Aviles & Dent, 2015; Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013; Karssiens, van der Linden, Wilderom, & Furtmueller, 2014; Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015). Mindfulness has been shown to be a precursor to authenticity (Leroy, Anseel, Dimitrova, & Sels, 2013), and a recent study revealed a positive influence of mindfulness on leader well-being (Roche, Haar, & Luthans, 2014). Yet, the potential benefits of mindfulness practices for educational leaders have yet to be fully realized. Scholars have voiced the need for research to examine the relationship between leader mindfulness and effective leadership, to better understand the potential mindfulness practices may offer on leader performance and well-being (Choi & Leroy, 2015; Malinowski & Lim, 2015; Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014; Verdorfer, 2016). This study addressed the currently limited insight into the application of mindfulness to the enactment of educational leadership.

Purpose of the Study

This research focused on the experience of an educational leader's efforts to cultivate attentional, cognitive and affective qualities through mindfulness practice, and how the cultivation of such qualities aligns with the enactment of leadership. As is true for most of the organizational mindfulness research, studies concerned with leadership have primarily examined the intrapersonal benefits of mindfulness practice (Verdorfer, 2016). For example, Roche et al (2014) associated leaders' mindfulness with reduced anxiety, depression, negative affect and burnout, while Karelaia and Reb (2015) examined the potential for mindfulness to improve leaders' judgment and decision making. Investigation of the interpersonal impact of mindfulness is rarely found in organizational scholarship and appears to be nearly non-existent in the context of educational leadership. This study contributes to the research by examining the potential benefits of mindfulness practices in connection with the doing and *being* of leadership, recognizing that leadership is an identity dependent upon human connection and interaction (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003).

Combining an autoethnographic approach with insights from phenomenology, this study involved a primary focus upon the researcher's lived experience of the evolving practices of mindfulness and leadership, and explored how the demands of the role of leadership were met by the cognitive, emotional, and relational capacities cultivated through mindfulness meditation.

Guiding Questions

The following research questions guided this inquiry:

1. What are my perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of my role as an educational leader?

2. In what manner is my cultivation of mindfulness perceived to be present in my enactment of educational leadership?
3. How are my professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice?

Before further examining the methods chosen to address these questions, I would like to illuminate the antecedents which drew my interest to this problem, in order to provide insight into the personal perspective through which I viewed the research as it unfolded. In as much as I was not only the research designer, but also the research subject and primary research instrument, it appears particularly important to account for the ways in which my own assumptions, experiences, and values may have influenced the research questions and study design. Spry (2001) communicates this particularity of self-study methods stating, “the researcher is the epistemological and ontological nexus upon which the research process turns” (p. 711).

Researcher-Leader Perspective

Research is inextricably connected to self, derived from personal interest, experience and passion (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang, 2010). Not surprisingly, then, this inquiry was anchored in my personal interest and experience, and my personal hopes and aspirations were embedded within the purpose of the study. The following discussion offers insight into the sociocultural perspective I brought to this research, a perspective formed through personal and professional experience and strongly influenced by the opportunities to travel and live abroad that life has afforded me.

Being well traveled, my paternal grandparents placed high value on the learning and growing experienced as one explores the world. When I graduated high school, my grandparents

bestowed a gift upon me that would forever change the course of my life, and profoundly change me as a person, offering the opportunity to spend the summer bicycling through Europe with a group of similar-aged strangers. This was my initiation into the eye- and mind- opening experience of interacting with people from all manner of places, cultures and backgrounds. Moreover, this experience gave birth to certain ideals and values that would continue to develop over time, taking root so deeply that they are now the foundation of how I see and interpret the world.

Cosmopolitanism

The concept of cosmopolitanism, appearing frequently in educational research, has been defined as looking at the self, others and the world with “the capacity to fuse reflective openness to the new with reflective loyalty to the known” (D. T. Hansen, Burdick-Shepherd, Cammarano, & Obelleiro, 2009, p. 151). In my first travel experience abroad, and in my many travel and international living experiences that continued throughout my adult life, I had to face the challenge of being indiscriminately placed with people of different nationalities, cultures, races, and beliefs. These interactions and the sense I have made from these interactions have helped me to develop a cosmopolitan perspective, an outlook on life that acknowledges the constant presence of change and of difference, and looks upon these conditions positively (D. T. Hansen et al., 2009). The path of my adult life, from the beginning of my teaching career until the present, has consisted of endless opportunities for exchange with others, and allowed me to develop a deep appreciation for change and difference.

Living and teaching in international schools in London, Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, I was taking in and adopting certain values of the societies I was living in, rather than holding firm to my home culture. Hansen et al. (2009) state, “a cosmopolitan outlook implies

leaving home in the closed, walled-in sense of the term . . . in the sense of dissolving the mystique of the given, of the sense that ‘the way things are’ is the way they must be” (p. 592). London was the first place where I consciously abandoned American-isms that stood in the way of fully integrating into my present context, and where I believe my cosmopolitan perspective first began to take root. For example, in London, one’s pronunciation and manner of speaking carried far more weight than I had ever experienced in the United States. While your accent could reveal to others where you were from – Boston versus New York, for example – it did not automatically determine your class status. I became far more conscious of how words left my mouth, not simply because of the endless teasing by my students about my pronunciation of “water” (wah-der as opposed to woh-ter), but also because of the underlying assumptions I knew others would make about me based on my speech.

Cosmopolitanism considers identity and culture to be fluid concepts (Spisak, 2009) and nowhere was this idea more pronounced than in my years teaching in Japan. In this international school setting, the innocent question, “Where are you from?” was extremely difficult for many to answer. The majority of the school population was comprised of what are commonly referred to as Third Culture Kids – children born to parents from two different countries, living a third country, with no distinct ties to any particular place (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Students would often speak of having multiple identities, being one person in Japan and another person altogether when visiting their “home” country, for lack of a better term. Appiah (1994) describes this phenomenon, stating, “We make up selves from a tool kit of options made available by our culture and society. We do make choices, but we don’t determine the options among which we choose” (p. 126). I saw this repeated in countless stories of the colleagues, children, and parents I encountered in Japan, whose collective identities fit no clear labels.

While not completely abandoning the beliefs and ideals of my upbringing, I could not help but be influenced by the cultures I was immersed in, and allow those beliefs and ideals I admired to become integrated into my own. Moss (2014) describes this transformative change as “adopting a new mode of thought . . . the familiar is made strange, what was formerly self-evident no longer seems so” (p. 8). The importance of collectivism and community in the Japanese culture, and the value of family in the multi-ethnic Singaporean communities prompted me to examine the American ideals of individuality, autonomy, and independence in a new light. Reflexivity is stressed within cosmopolitanism (Gunesh, 2013; Rizvi, 2006), in the understanding that one’s perspective is subject to transformation as a result of engagement with other cultural beliefs and critical self-reflection about one’s own country and culture.

Listening and dialogue are also recurring themes in the cosmopolitan literature and appear to be the foundation of building a cosmopolitan perspective. It is the act of listening and engaging in dialogue with others that affected my understanding and way of thinking about the world. Cosmopolitanism recognizes the self and others as growing beings (D. T. Hansen et al., 2009) and efforts toward creating space for dialogue as the foundation for learning (D. T. Hansen, 2010). Similar theoretical foundations can be found in the social-constructivist philosophy of development, which has also had a profound impact on how I view life, learning, and leadership.

Social-Constructivist Teaching, Learning, and Leading

My teaching career has primarily been in settings inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education, and it is interesting to me how many parallels exist between this perspective and the concept of cosmopolitanism. Hoyuelos (2013) reviews Loris Malaguzzi’s conception that

“variability or change is an invariable element of life. Change should be understood not as the transition from one state to another, but rather as the permanent state of human existence – not the permanency of pre-established ideas, but the permanent capacity to modify or change behaviors as a function of the essential variability of the human being” (cited in Moss, 2014, p. 9).

The Reggio Emilia approach reflects a social constructivist philosophy, influenced by the theories of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, and Gardner. There is a strong belief in the competent child, and a view of learning as a group activity rather than an individual one. Curriculum is shaped through active participation of all protagonists, including children, teachers and parents as well as the learning environment. Theories and interests of the children drive the learning process, with teachers acting as researchers documenting the words and actions of the children in order to guide decisions as to the path of study the group will follow. From this social-constructivist lens, adults as well as children are works in progress and in a constant state of growing and developing, striving to be continuously open to new ideas and possibilities and to exploring other perspectives (Rinaldi, 2005).

In my transition from educator to educational leader, I have held firmly to this philosophy and apply the same thinking to supporting the development of my teaching colleagues as I did to supporting the development of young children. In Reggio Emilia-inspired early childhood settings, schools are viewed as systems of relationships, which are all interconnected and reciprocal, including that of child to teacher (Gandini, 2003). There is a commitment to offering children respect and trust. A child is seen as “strong, powerful and rich in potential and resources” and “capable of constructing his or her own knowledge” (Rinaldi, 2013, p. 15). In viewing adults in the same way, as competent, capable and growing beings, and in viewing adult

learning in the same way, as a group activity rather than an individual one, listening and dialogue are as crucial to adult development as they are to child development.

Rather than evaluator, the role of leader in a social constructivist environment can be thought of as “manager of meaning” (Fairhurst, 2009, p. 1613) or “sensemanager” (Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005, p. 82), engaging community members in constructing meaning or making sense of the problems and issues at hand. From my perspective, this is the primary purpose of an educational leader. This process, as described by Seiling and Hinrichs (2005), is illustrated using the exact terms teachers use to describe the processes of the children in the classroom: “members interpret their environment in and through interactions with others, constructing accounts that allow them to comprehend the world” (p. 83).

Leading the interactions and exchanges of members of an organization requires first, the capacity to understand oneself; second, the capacity to engage in dialogue in order to understand the perspectives of others; and third, the capacity to understand the organization as a system of interacting and continually changing beings (Drath & Palus, 1994). As a sensemanager, a leader “engages the collective creativity of the organization’s members to be mindful, make sense of the situation or issue, and be accountable to each other to construct their new future” (Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005, p. 82). Mindfulness, therefore, appears to me to be a crucial element of the adults’ work together and this understanding was the driver for my interest in the topic and the focal point influencing the formulation of the guiding questions that have been presented.

Research Approach

Combining an autoethnographic approach with insights from phenomenology to address the research questions, self-perceptions of my own experiences cultivating attentional, cognitive and affective qualities through mindfulness practice were examined. These were compared to

reports from colleagues on the enactment of leadership, providing an outside view that could be compared to my internal experience. Numerous data collection methods develop the layering of data from different perspectives, adding to the trustworthiness of the study. Although the design of the research will be outlined in detail in Chapter Three, a brief examination of the combined autoethnographic and autophenomenographic approaches is provided here to offer an initial understanding.

The Etymology of Autoethnophenomenography

Understanding the etymology of autoethnography and autophenomenography, one can gain a better sense of the ontological and epistemological positions underlying these closely connected but also distinct methodologies. From Ancient Greek αὐτός *autos*- meaning “self” or “one’s own”; ἔθνος *ethnos*- meaning “nation”; γράφω *grapho*- meaning “to write” or “to record”; φαινόμενον *phainomenon*- meaning “thing appearing to view” (Wiktionary), have been applied in various combinations to describe introspective research methods.

Autoethnography, research in which authors take knowledge gained from personal experience as a means of providing insight into cultural experience (Ellis & Adams, 2014), has been described as a methodology residing on a continuum with researchers varying in emphasis on the elements of “self”, “nation”, and “writing” (Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Reed-Danahay, 1997). If considered as residing on the autoethnographic continuum, autophenomenography (Allen-Collinson, 2009, 2011; Gruppeta, 2004) “might be construed as extending the *auto* focus further inward to the phenomenal layers of the researcher’s lived experience” (Allen-Collinson, 2016, p. 291). This form of research involves a primary focus upon the researcher’s lived experience of a phenomenon or phenomena (Gruppeta, 2004),

examining the self engaging in a specific way to things as they appear to the conscious mind (Allen-Collinson, 2011, 2016).

Analogous to autoethnography, autophenomenography demands in-depth, rich and descriptively detailed accounts of first-person perception and experience, bringing to life the felt existence of the embodied self (Allen-Collinson, 2011, 2016). The approach recognizes the relationship between mind (consciousness), body (self) and environment (world) as “fundamentally intertwined, inter-relating and mutually influencing” and the situatedness of mind and body within the social-structural, historical and cultural aspects of experience (Allen-Collinson, 2011, p. 49). The method requires a certain attentive awareness to the things of the world as we live them (van Manen, 1990), with the aim of capturing and understanding how it actually feels to experience a phenomenon or phenomena. Extending upon the autoethnographer’s notion of “thick description” (Geertz, 1973), autophenomenography also relies on “thick participation” (Samudra, 2008), where knowledge is felt and recorded first in the research’s body and later externalized as textual data for analysis.

The approach to research for this study included documenting in detail my engagement in mindfulness practice, keeping notes in terms of timings and forms of practices undertaken, and recording in detail the specific, concrete, subjective and corporeal experiences. The study also involved documenting the felt states of leadership, diving deeply into the emotion of this particular aspect of identity, and approaching leadership as a phenomenon or lived experience, as well as a social-cultural category and construct.

The combination of the autoethnographic approach with the insights of phenomenology allowed me to examine and analyze my subjective experience of the *doing* of the activities of mindfulness and leadership. This provided the opportunity to develop not only a cognitive

understanding of the training and performance of these activities, but also the corporal, embedded-in-everyday-practice, embodied understanding of how it actually feels to *be* a mindful leader (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014).

Definition of Terms

It is likely that some of the terms and concepts that appear in the forthcoming discussion may be unfamiliar to some readers. This section will address that issue by providing an overview of the foundational terms and concepts related to this study.

Mindfulness has a wide variety of conceptualizations, and can refer to both individual (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Langer, 1989) and collective forms (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006). The individual form has been depicted as (a) a state of mind; b) an enduring dispositional trait, (c) a process or set of behaviors, and (d) an intervention program (Choi & Leroy, 2015; Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Mindfulness has origins in ancient eastern traditions, in particular Buddhism, and when considered within its original context, it is a means to enlightenment. Mindfulness in Western science and organizations, however, is most often described as a form of attention, reflecting a departure from the original conceptualization. The varying definitions of mindfulness will be discussed at length in the Review of Literature which follows, as will the process for determining the definition used for the purposes of the proposed study. *Mindfulness*, for the purposes of this inquiry, refers to the individual form derived from Buddhist tradition and is defined as the state of enhanced, sustained attention to and awareness of what is taking place in the present (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003). In the simplest terms, mindfulness is a state of consciousness. To differentiate this definition from the other individual and collective conceptualizations of mindfulness, qualifiers will be provided any time these other definitions

enter the discussion, using the terms *Langer's (1989) concept of mindfulness* and *collective mindfulness*.

Langer's (1989) concept of mindfulness emphasizes the cognitive aspects of the term, referring to the meta-process with which people interpret external stimuli. Mindfulness, from her perspective, is the process of actively noticing new information, refining existing cognitive categories and drawing new distinctions, with a more nuanced appreciation of context (pp. 138-159). This process creates openness to new possibilities and perspectives. Her work is more concerned with reducing mindlessness than it is with practices that increase mindfulness. Her version of the concept is strictly nonmeditative, and therefore, it has little relevance to the inquiry proposed in this paper.

Collective mindfulness is closely related to Langer's (1989) definition of mindfulness, taking her conceptualization and interpreting it as a collective capacity for organizations (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). As a collective phenomenon, mindfulness is defined as a set of five organizational processes: (a) preoccupation with failure; (b) reluctance to simplify interpretations; (c) sensitivity to operations; (d) commitment to resilience; and (e) under-specification of structures (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 1999, pp. 38-39). When established, these processes lead to the collective organization's ability to discover and manage unexpected events, increasing effectiveness. Here again, due to the disparity between this definition and those derived from contemplative practices, this definition has little relevance to the proposed inquiry.

With the understanding that mindfulness herein refers to the state of enhanced, sustained attention to and awareness of what is taking place in the present (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003), a few additional clarifications are necessary. To distinguish between the state of mindfulness and

the practices used to cultivate this state, the phrase **mindfulness practice** will be used to refer to the systematic mental training applied through meditation in an effort to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). The phrase **cultivation of mindfulness**, as it is used in describing the purpose of the study and the framing of the research questions, is defined in the same way, meaning these terms are applied interchangeably.

Finally, **leadership**, within this paper, is conceptualized as a state that an individual can enter and exit, within which one is focused on collective needs and goals and intent on influencing the collective toward results that benefit the whole. Leadership, understood in this way, is socially constructed and cannot be claimed without being granted by others (Ashford & DeRue, 2012).

Significance of the Study

It is understood by mindfulness practitioners and researchers that “self-care and other-care are interlinked: practicing one leads to the other” (Barker, 2010, p. 44). Prior research has suggested self-awareness, emotion regulation, emotional intelligence, stress management, and high quality interpersonal relationships, capacities demanded by educational leadership (George, 2000), are benefits of mindfulness practice (Abenavoli, Jennings, Greenberg, Harris, & Katz, Autumn 2013). In its efforts to describe and analyze an educational leader’s experience, this study sought to provide new knowledge regarding the potential for mindfulness to offer a practical and effective means of building and sustaining attentional, cognitive and affective qualities. This study sheds light on the relationship between leader mindfulness and leadership behaviors, development and outcomes, and in doing so, offers insight toward the construction of more effective leadership development and support. This study addresses the proposed promise of mindfulness as a resource for fundamental change (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015) and a

means of creating learning organizations that support members' performance and well-being in equal measure (Reb et al., 2014).

The topics and themes uncovered by capturing how an educational leader's practice has been informed and adapted over time through mindfulness practice offer new understanding about the demands of the role and the necessary supports for leadership development. The knowledge gained from this inquiry may impact the field by providing insight for school leaders in a variety of settings, as well as leaders in other organizations and contexts. Purveyors and providers of personal and professional development programs may have interest in the findings of this study, as may mindfulness practitioners and researchers. Just as the conceptual and theoretical literature may inform the experience, Wells (2015) suggests, the experience can inform the conceptual and theoretical literature by providing insights as to how concepts appear in application and practice.

Delimitations of the Study

In order to allow for depth of understanding of leadership identity development as it happens in everyday experience, this study examined one leader in one context across a limited period of time. The decision to restrict the study to the experience of an individual leader was made in an attempt to offer a more holistic understanding of mindfulness, captured through repeated and extended observation and reflection (Choi & Leroy, 2015).

The techniques and practices used to cultivate mindfulness were confined to those outlined by the online Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR; Kabat-Zinn, 1982) training program offered by Sounds True, by the online Mindful Schools courses (Mindfulness Fundamentals; Mindful Educator Essentials; Mindful Communication; Difficult Emotions), and by the in-person Search Inside Yourself training offered by Google. With a wide variety of

training methods and diverse sets of practices available, these programs were chosen as the best fit for the problem being investigated. The objectives of mindfulness training were determined to be self-awareness, self-regulation and self-transcendence, based on the model offered by Vago and Silbersweig (2012) which is discussed at length in the Review of the Literature.

When examining interpersonal aspects of leadership and effects of mindfulness, this inquiry focused on collegial relationships. This restriction of the scope of the study to the interactions between the leader and the faculty, excluding children, families and the wider community, arose from the intention to examine these relationships and interactions in significant detail.

A vast array of methods for collecting data are available within autoethnographic and phenomenological approaches. The tools chosen for reflection and evaluation were selected based on their theoretical foundations, being similar to the theoretical foundations held by the researcher and upon which this inquiry was constructed.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The current chapter, Chapter One, introduces the researcher-practitioner, and provides a context and rationale for the exploration of mindfulness in school leadership. The antecedents to the selection of the topic are described in a statement of the researcher's personal perspective. The purpose of the study is framed around the significant problem of the knowing-doing gap in educational leadership practice, offering an explanation why such research is necessary. A definition of terms is provided to aid the reader. The research methodology is described briefly, followed by an explanation of the study context. Delimitations are noted and explained.

Chapter Two further advances a conceptual framework to guide this study. Three literature reviews are offered, beginning with a scan of contemporary leadership theory and leader development theory and how these contribute to the present understanding of school leadership. This is followed by an exploration of the phenomenon of mindfulness, including a discussion of historical and contemporary definitions, the practices applied in an effort to cultivate mindfulness, and the mechanisms by which these practices work. This section continues with a look at the myriad benefits attributed to mindfulness practice, and the resulting applications of mindfulness in schools and organizations. A third literature review serves to contextualize the research in the frame of autoethnophenomenography as a living inquiry, defining and justifying this choice of method.

Chapter Three outlines the methodological framework that supports the purposes and research questions for the study. A detailed overview of the research design is offered, as are the data collection procedures. The data analysis procedures are then described and issues of trustworthiness are discussed. Limitations of the study conclude this chapter.

Chapter Four offers an analysis of the data. The emergent themes and resultant findings for each research question are included.

Chapter Five concludes the study with a discussion of the findings and consideration of the significance, including practical and theoretical implications. A synthesis of understanding about the application of mindfulness for educational leaders is provided. This chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter One introduced the researcher-practitioner and provided a context and rationale for the exploration of mindfulness in school leadership. This chapter further advances a conceptual framework to guide this study. Three literature reviews are offered, beginning with a scan of contemporary leadership theory and leader development theory and how these contribute to the present understanding of school leadership. In keeping with the social-constructivist lens of this study, this section of the review will offer a particular focus on the branch of literature examining the influence of the social context on leadership, and the manner in which the leadership capacity of the collective can be developed.

An exploration of the phenomenon of mindfulness will follow, including a discussion of historical and contemporary literature offering definitions, specifying the practices applied in an effort to cultivate mindfulness, and explaining the mechanisms by which these practices work. This section continues with a look at the myriad benefits attributed to mindfulness practice, and the resulting applications of mindfulness in schools and organizations. A third literature review serves to contextualize the research in the frame of autoethnophenomenography as a living inquiry, defining and justifying this choice of method.

Leadership

Scholarship attests to a rich tradition of theoretical development and empirical research in the study of leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Bass & Bass, 2008). Yet, much of the research in leadership has been dedicated to defining and delineating effective leadership, with limited attention given to the development of leadership (DeRue & Myers, 2014). The scholarship related to the field of leadership is rapidly evolving, however, as definitions and understandings of the role of leadership change (Avolio et al., 2009).

In this knowledge driven era, traditional, hierarchical, individual models of leadership are proving to be less applicable to the contexts in which we live and work. As such, leadership theories are beginning to consider a more holistic process of leadership, as opposed to the singular actions of an individual leader (Van Wart, 2013). Leadership is now most often defined as a process of social and mutual influence, where multiple actors engage in interactions in service of accomplishing a collective goal and seen as an emergent capacity that continues to grow and evolve over time (Avolio et al., 2009; Yukl, 2010). Understood to be contextual and temporal (O'Connell, 2014), the effectiveness of leadership is considered a product of the connections and relationships within the system rather than a result of the efforts of a singular leader.

While scholarship in the field of leadership development has grown tremendously in recent years, the understanding of how theory effectively becomes practice is lacking (Robinson, 2010). Though theories have declared the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for a leader to be effective (Bryk et al., 2015; Hallinger, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Heifetz & Linksky, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2008; Marzano et al., 2005; T. V. Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007; Yukl, 1989), it is not clear from the current research what types of experiences would develop the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities. Understanding which capacities the role demands is not the same as understanding how to cultivate these capacities (Wells, 2015).

Further, the existing literature's primary focus on individual skills and competencies often fails to consider the social reality of organizations (DeRue, 2011; DeRue & Ashford, 2010). With a few exceptions such as leader-member exchange theory (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995) and positive organizational scholarship (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003), by a large margin, most of the current models of leadership development focus on the individual and do not address the

relational or collective level. Even within research which considers the relational dimension, the literature tends to focus on leader's behaviors and exclude the influence of other social actors (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978).

This continued focus on individual capacities has a key limitation, in that it does not address leadership, as it is now defined, as a complex and interactive process. Focusing on the individual leader presumes that developing a singular person's knowledge, skills, and abilities will result in more effective leadership. This approach denies the strong influence of the social context and fails to address how the capacity of the collective can be developed (DeRue & Myers, 2014). It has been argued that leadership development is always a multilevel process (Avolio, 2004), including not only the leader but the leader's relationships with organizational members and interaction with the organizational climate and culture.

With this understanding, leadership development is not about simply building the capacity of the individual leader, but also building the capacity of the collective through mutual influence and relational networks (Day, 2000). Though there is currently limited insight into the construction of high-quality relationships (DeRue & Workman, 2012), it is beginning to be understood that both leader and leadership development are necessary and essential (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Individual leaders need support in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be effective in their role, while organizations need support in developing effective interactions, relationships and collective structures (DeRue & Myers, 2014). As questions have begun to turn away from the *what* of leadership competencies, to the *how* and *why* of leadership development processes (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009), a rapid growth in research (Day, 2000; McCall, 2010; Pearce, 2007) points to the need and demand for insight into the various ways individuals and organizations can enhance leadership.

It has been suggested that leadership involves a complex integration of behavioral, cognitive and social capabilities that develop in individuals at varying rates and through a variety of learning experiences (Day & Halpin, 2004; M. D. Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000). In the process of developing and practicing leadership, the role of leader is believed to become part of an individual's identity. This integration of behavioral, cognitive and social capabilities at a deep level is thought to prompt continued growth and development (Lord & Hall, 2005), promoting a more complex understanding of self as well as a more expert level of leadership performance. Before entering into further discussion of the process of leader development, it seems important to define more thoroughly the contemporary concept of leadership and to outline the behavioral, cognitive and social capabilities that are required by the role, reviewing the *what* before turning to the *how* and *why*.

Contemporary Perspectives on Leadership

At this point in time, leaders in all domains face complex challenges and destabilizing change (Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013). Calls for change and improvement abound (Wells, 2013, 2015), increasing the work intensity and high-stakes climate of many organizations. In the face of uncertainty, theories have emerged examining the leader's role in developing organizational capacities for managing change and considering the contextual and temporal influences on leadership development. These contemporary leadership theories invite analysis to identify the particular knowledge, skills and abilities currently considered essential to the role.

Leadership as managing organizational change. In times of rapid change, leadership is often tasked with supporting people through the reinvention of structures, procedures, values and goals. The Adaptive Leadership Theory considers how change can often be interpreted as loss, and people's habits, beliefs and values may be challenged by proposed organizational

adaptations (Heifetz & Linksky, 2002). Responsibility for problem solving and determining solutions, therefore, needs to be shared. Leaders need to ask questions rather than supply answers, and support others in garnering the collective intelligence of the organization. The real work of adaptive leadership, according to Heifetz & Linsky (2004), “involves giving the work back to the people who must adapt, and mobilizing them to do so” (p. 34). The quality of professional relationships is central in this theory of leadership, where opportunities for influence do not depend on position, but can come from anywhere in the organization.

Relationships are also key within Transformational Leadership Theory, which places great importance on the leader’s role in establishing trust in the organization (Gillespie & Mann, 2004). It is the trust and respect in members’ relationships with one another that provides the motivation to meet or exceed high performance expectations. Similar to adaptive leadership, transformational leadership “refers to the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization’s mission, objectives, and strategies” (Yukl, 1989, p. 269). Leadership practices include communicating values and purpose, communicating vision and goals, supporting individual development, and encouraging different perspectives (Bass, 1985). These practices may be exhibited by anyone in the organization, in any position (Burns, 1978).

Complexity Leadership Theory (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007) also examines the role of leadership in enabling interaction and adaptation. Leadership is described as “a complex interplay of many interacting forces” and the function of leadership as effectively managing “the entanglement between administrative and adaptive structures and behaviors” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007, p. 314). Leaders foster and develop connections in the system, extending decision making responsibilities to subordinates and

creating “organized disorder” (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001, p. 406) by allowing creative activity at multiple levels within the system. As just one element of a dynamic, interactive network, the leader creates the conditions necessary for innovation rather than creating innovation itself. Leadership transcends the individual, where leaders are not directly responsible for change, but rather “enable the conditions within which the process occurs” (Lichtenstein et al., 2006, p. 3).

Leadership as service to others. The expanding knowledge of adult development, and the understanding that growth is a life-long process has influenced the present day view of leadership. Authentic Leadership Theory focuses on the self-awareness and self-regulatory processes a leader draws upon to make decisions and engage in interactions that remain true to personal values or convictions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Leadership development is viewed as an ongoing process, where self-awareness is emerging as the leader gains more understanding of his or her values, identity, emotions and goals (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005), and self-regulation is emerging as the leader aligns his or her self-awareness with intentions and actions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

This consistency between the leader’s self, words and deeds is how authentic leaders influence followers and support followers’ development. Leaders who are deeply aware of how they think and behave, and are perceived by others as acting in a manner consistent with their values and the organizational context, invite and inspire greater self-awareness and positive self-development in others (Avolio, 2004; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leadership encompasses an inherent moral/ethical component, in that leaders draw upon moral perspectives to achieve sustained moral and ethical actions (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). The efforts of the leader are not only aimed at helping the organization flourish, but are equally

concerned with developing individuals, teams, and the organizational community so that these may prosper.

Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) also seeks to enhance the growth of followers and encourage learning and autonomy. Putting others' needs, aspirations and interests above his or her own, the servant leader seeks to serve first, rather than lead. In order to change an organization (or society altogether), the leader must "produce enough people who will change it" (p. 22). Spears (2000) identified ten characteristics or attributes of servant leadership: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

In a review of the existing literature on the theory, Russell and Stone (2002) doubled this list, naming 20 attributes: vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciation of others, empowerment, communication, credibility, competence, stewardship, visibility, influence, persuasion, listening, encouragement, teaching, and delegation. At its core, therefore, servant leadership is about caring and the quality of relationships within organizational life. While adaptive leadership, transformational leadership, complexity leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership all emphasize the power of professional relationships, other theories have taken this further in an effort to move beyond the reciprocal leader and follower relationships and recognize leadership wherever it occurs.

Leadership as a collaborative process. The flattening of organizations into more horizontal rather than hierarchical structures has placed new demands on leadership. In recent years, there has been an effort to conceptualize leadership as shared (Pearce & Conger, 2003) or distributed (Gronn, 2002). Viewed in this way, leadership is a "collaborative, emergent process of group interaction" where influence is exerted in the "exchanges of lateral influence" (Cox,

Pearce, & Perry, 2003, p. 53) of organization members. Multiple voices and sources of influence result in collective decision making, replacing the traditional hierarchy with heterarchy (Gronn, 2002).

Concurrently, leadership is also being examined from a constructionist perspective, where the leader is brought into being in the context of relationships (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Relational Leadership Theory views knowledge as socially constructed and distributed, and as such, the “persons, leadership and other relational realities are made in process” (p. 655). Rather than focus on the attributes or behaviors of the individual leader, this theory focuses on the social construction of understandings of leadership. This perspective raises new questions about leadership, and how it emerges within the network of organizational relationships. A strong emphasis is given to the communication and language exchanged between members, where the meaning emerges in the “space between” (Bradbury & Bergmann, 2000; Fairhurst, 2009).

Insights into leadership through this lens would come from understanding the relational mechanisms in an organization, how language is used in interactions, and the social processes used to develop collective understanding. A relational leader would pay attention to moments of difference in dialogue, and create open spaces for working out these differences. This requires the leader to be attuned to the present moment, in order to observe, listen and anticipate opportunities for creating understanding (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011).

Leadership as the management of emotion. Given the importance of relationships highlighted in contemporary leadership theories, emotional abilities appear crucial to the role of leader. The abilities to perceive, understand and manage emotions can enhance the skills and behaviors associated with leadership, such as building trust, creating positive social interactions, enhancing collaboration, and supporting individual growth (Emery, 2012). In their interactions,

leaders both display emotions and attempt to invoke emotions in others, and both emotional expressiveness and emotional regulation have important implications for a leader's perceived authenticity (Rajah, Song, & Arvey, 2011). A leader's ability to manage feelings of frustration and display feelings of optimism, as well as manage group members' emotional states, has a strong influence on organization climate and performance (Humphrey, 2002). While research into the relationship between emotions and leadership is relatively new, there is consistency in the determination that emotions are important to leadership.

Emotional intelligence has attracted much attention and investigation in its relationship to leadership (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001; Goleman, January 2004; Goleman & Boyzatis, Sept 2008). The five components of emotional intelligence – self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill – have been positively related to leader effectiveness (Rajah et al., 2011). Valid measurement of emotional intelligence has proven to be a significant challenge, due to lack of agreement regarding a definition or instrument (Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). Further concerns have been raised regarding the overlap between emotional intelligence and other known predictors of leadership including personality, intelligence, and ability (Cavazotte, Moreno, & Hickmann, 2012). Despite the concerns about measurement, however, there are a number of theoretical and empirical arguments offered linking emotional intelligence and effective leadership (Harms & Crede, 2010).

A deeper understanding of the essential nature of emotional abilities in leadership can be gained from an examination of Transformational Leadership Theory. Transformational leadership has received particular attention in the research, likely due to the relevance of specific elements of this theory to emotional intelligence. With the connection between transformational leadership and positive outcomes now well established, researchers are interested in determining

the capabilities that inform leadership capacities and decisions (F. W. Brown & Moshavi, 2005), and emotional intelligence has shown promise in this regard (F. W. Brown, Bryant, & Reilly, 2006).

Acting as a mentor, encouraging learning and development, empowering and inspiring followers, a transformational leader would naturally depend upon the ability to understand and manage emotions (Rubin et al., 2005). In an empirical study, emotional intelligence has been positively associated with three of the four aspects of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000). Further, several empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between self-awareness and leadership performance (F. W. Brown et al., 2006). Key transformational leadership behaviors such as inspiration, motivation, and influence appear closely linked to emotional awareness and competence, indicating that the effectiveness of the leader is dependent upon his or her emotional intelligence.

Leadership as supporting a community of learners. Contemporary perspectives on leadership propose that in order to excel, organizations must have the capacity to respond to the increasing complexity of the world, and to learn new ways of thinking and working. Senge (2006), in describing what is necessary to develop a learning organization, used the word “metanoia” (p. 13). This word refers to a shift of mind, a fundamental change, or literally transcendence. What is needed in organizations, is metanoia, or real learning, as Senge described: “Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we re-create ourselves . . . Through learning we re-perceive the world and our relationship to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create . . . (p. 13).”

Because there can be no organization more focused on learning and development than a school, it seems an appropriate time to turn attention toward this specific context and proceed in this literature review with a particular focus on the implications for educational leaders. In contexts plagued by continual and unpredictable change, the demands on educational leaders are tremendous (Leithwood, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Educational leaders are tasked with the responsibility of producing change (Hallinger, 2003; Kotter, March-April 1995), a responsibility which demands skills such as creating vision, influencing others, building relationships, communicating effectively, supporting capacity building, and establishing a harmonious culture (Bryk et al., 2009; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2006). Educational leaders aspire to influence other people's motivation, knowledge and practices in order to facilitate more effective teaching and learning (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015). Educational leadership is a profession in which building trust and communicating effectively are essential (Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Evolving trends in education reform have been mirrored by an evolution in the role of educational leader. With shared leadership, distributed leadership, and transformational leadership theories emerging in the general leadership literature, the field of education has been influenced and attention has been shifted from hierarchical models to these emerging models focused on change management and capacity-building. Implicit in this shift is an understanding that leadership may come from a variety of people in the school, and that the primary role of the leader is to create the conditions for continuous learning and improvement (Hallinger, 2003).

Understood in this manner, leadership is considered as more of a function than a role. The primary aims of leadership – providing direction and exercising influence – are achievable

only through work with others (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Synthesizing research from seven countries, Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) determined the successful practices of school leadership as: building vision and setting directions; understanding and developing people; redesigning the organization; and managing the teaching and learning program. In order to apply these practices, leaders must create a sense of purpose and a shared vision, provide intellectual stimulation and support for individual growth, and build a collaborative school culture. In order to establish and maintain the social trust that is an essential element of each of these leadership practices, relationships with students, teachers, parents and the wider community must be prioritized (Bryk & Schneider, March 2003).

As emerging leadership theories are being applied to this context there is increasing interest in the issue of trust in schools. Respectful exchanges, personal regard, professional competence and personal integrity characterize relationships where trust exists (Bryk & Schneider, March 2003). In school communities where there is a high degree of interconnectedness and where organizational goals are multi-faceted, a range of factors can sustain or inhibit trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Leadership plays a key role in creating the conditions that foster and sustain trust (Bryk & Schneider, March 2003). Attention to daily relationships inspires confidence in the school leader as an individual, providing the foundation for trust necessary for institutional change and organizational improvement (Seashore Louis, 2007). In these times of great change, the need for leadership to provide direction, exert influence, and foster and sustain trust has implications for the capabilities required for school leaders, or all leaders for that matter, to be successful.

The Demands of Leadership

Despite some differences in the way the discussed contemporary leadership theories view the role of the leader, an examination of the literature reveals consistent reference to certain skills or capabilities demanded by the role. To offer a comparison of the theoretical perspectives, key capabilities of leadership as described by the examined theories have been listed in Table 1, including self-awareness, self-regulation, emotional intelligence, interpersonal influence, and reflection, among others.

A bold plus sign appears in the table to indicate whether a particular theory explicitly named this certain skill within the relevant literature reviewed. For example, in their discussion of Authentic Leadership development, Avolio & Gardner (2005) stated, “Our central premise is that through increased self-awareness, self-regulation, and positive modeling, authentic leaders foster the development of authenticity in followers” (p. 317). Based on this and several similar statements made in this article and other sources discussing Authentic Leadership, a bold plus sign was entered under Authentic Leadership next to self-awareness and self-regulation.

A caret symbol appears in the table to indicate the skill was referred to within the discussion of the particular theory, but not explicitly named. For example, again referring to Avolio & Gardner (2005) for consistency, included in a list of components of Authentic Leadership development are social identification, relational transparency and positive social exchanges (p. 323). In this context, the capacity of responsiveness is determined to be implied. Therefore, a caret symbol has been entered under Authentic Leadership next to responsiveness. No symbol is indicated in cases when the particular theory made no mention of a particular skill nor reference to any capabilities or attributes that reflected the particular skill.

Table 1

Key Capacities of Leadership

	AdL	TL	CL	AuL	DL	RL	SL
Self-awareness	+	+	^	+	^	+	+
Self-regulation	+			+			+
Attention	+	^				+	
Psych. well-being	^			+			^
Emotional intelligence	+	^	^	+	^	^	^
Responsiveness			+	^	^	+	
Openness	+		^	+	^	^	+
Empathy/Compassion	^			^			+
Cognitive flexibility	^		^		+		+
Perspective taking	+		+	^	^	^	+
Adaptiveness	+		^			^	^
Creativity	^		+				+
Interpersonal influence	^		+	+	+	+	+
Reflection	+					+	+

Note. AdL = Adaptive Leadership, TL = Transformational Leadership, CL = Complexity Leadership, AuL = Authentic Leadership, DL = Distributed Leadership, RL = Relational Leadership, SL = Servant Leadership. + denotes capacity is included in the leadership theory, ^ denotes capacity is referred to in the leadership theory, but not explicitly named.

Now, having developed a more thorough understanding of the capabilities demanded by leadership, the discussion will turn toward the support and development of such capabilities. It is important here to first address the difference between leader development and leadership development, as these are two distinct concepts. A frequently cited review of the leadership development literature (Day, 2000) distinguishes between the two by remarking that leader development focuses on an individual's capacity to participate in leadership processes, while leadership development focuses on developing the capacity of collectives to participate in leadership processes, attending to the interpersonal dynamics.

Though both leader development and leadership development are viewed as essential for enabling more effective leadership, and are assumed to be interdependent and mutually beneficial, the autoethnophenomenological design of this study as an investigation of an individual leader precludes an in-depth examination of relationships and collective structures outside of the author's purview. Further, leader development is generally considered to precede leadership development, in that individual leaders must have a basic level of skills to build effective relationships with others before social capital can be realized (Day, 2000). Therefore, the discussion that follows will place more emphasis on leader development as it directly applies to this research.

Leadership through a Developmental Lens

For decades, scholars have advocated for the application of developmental theories to inform our understanding leadership, recognizing the need for more in-depth knowledge of how adults make sense of themselves and their experience (Bartunek, Gordon, & Weathersby, 1983). Building upon Piaget's studies of children's developmental transformations, researchers have developed theories on the progressively expanding meaning-making capacities evident in

adulthood. Social-constructivist developmental theory (Kegan, 1980; Kohlberg, 1969) has been applied to the topic of leadership development (Drago-Severson, 2012; Kegan & Lahey, 1984; McCauley, Drath, Palus, O'Connor, & Baker, 2006) and has offered preliminary insights into how professional growth can be promoted through experiences specifically aimed at increasing performance potential. Senge (2006) has advocated for the application of personal mastery and reflection on mental models to organizational learning, implying that development of more complex forms of thinking is necessary in leadership. Rather than learning, training and development aimed at expanding or enriching a leader's current way of making meaning, researchers are beginning to turn toward models that broaden perspectives in order to truly transform current ways of doing, being and thinking (Cook-Greuter, 2004).

Development is considered a process of adaptation and transformation (Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999), that in adulthood, is heavily dependent upon experience (Moshman, 2003). Adults, over time, are believed to engage in the construction of naturally evolving meaning making systems, which grow more comprehensive and complex as a more diverse range of experience is integrated into organizing principles (Kegan, 1980). Development is driven by new challenges, revealing limitations in the current way of thinking and prompting a more complex way of understanding self and the world (Cook-Greuter, 2004). Though often presented in stages or linear models, most theories recognize development as evolving in a spiral, rather than linear fashion, with movement possible in all directions, including regression, expansion, and transformation.

Portraying Ego Development theory alongside Wilber's (2006) All Quadrants, All Levels (AQAL) map of human experience and Torbert's (2004) action inquiry, Cook-Greuter (2004) examines human development as a progression of different ways of making sense of reality. The

interrelated dimensions of doing (behavior), being (affect), and thinking (cognition) are said to influence how self-awareness expands and is acted upon, developing in increasingly complex ways. In an effort to identify the meaning-making processes of an individual, the following essential questions are offered for each dimension:

Behavioral: How does a person interact? What are the needs they act upon and what ends do they try to achieve? How do they cope with and master their lives? What function do others play in an individual's life?

Affective: How do they feel about things? How do they deal with affect? What is the range of awareness and of their selective perception? How are events experienced and processed? What are the preferred defenses?

Cognitive: How does a person think? How do individuals structure experience, how do they explain things, make sense of their experience? What is the logic behind their perspectives on the self and the world? (p. 3)

Leadership, through a developmental lens, involves experience-based learning and growth toward more complex ways of making meaning.

A Universal Model of Leadership

Integrating theory and research on leadership, organizational development and human development, Anderson & Adams (2016) created a model of leadership that addresses what effective leadership looks like and how its development can be supported. The model takes into account both the explicit and the implicit expectations of leadership, addressing the outcomes that are generally explicitly listed in job descriptions for the role including accountability, strategy and responsibility, as well as those behaviors that are implicitly associated with the role such as commitment, engagement, and listening. Identity lies at the core of the model, based on

the understanding that who we are determines our behavior and strategies and how we take up the role of leader. Leadership evolves as identity evolves.

Reactive leadership emerges from a reactive mind, which constructs the self from the outside, as defined by one of three external factors: relationships, intellect, or results.

Developmental theories have described this externally defined ego as a conformist (Cook-Greuter, 2004) or socialized self (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), pointing to the powerful influence of these outside factors on the core assumptions that drive behavior. Reactive leadership is limited in effectiveness because of the core assumptions that result from an externally defined identity. An identity defined by relationships, for example, will draw out fear of rejection and result in indecisiveness and compliance. An identity defined by results will draw out fear of failure and elicit more controlling actions and less collaborative behaviors. Led by a reactive mind, an organization may be competency driven and prioritize loyalty. People within the organization may feel informed, supported, and may have their input solicited, but are unlikely to be significantly involved in decision-making.

Creative leadership emerges from a creative mind, which constructs the self from the inside. Developmental theorists have described this internally defined ego as individualist (Cook-Greuter, 2004) or self-authoring (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), referring to the authentic expression of inner purpose that is reflected in behavior. Creative leadership seeks to develop self and others, sharing power through actions promoting engagement and collaboration in decision-making.

Creative leadership, Anderson and Adams (2016) contend, is what has been described in various ways in the leadership literature. What has been missed in the understanding of leadership effectiveness theorized by contemporary scholars, however, is the structure of the

inner mind that drives the purpose-driven, visionary, authentic behaviors that have been identified as essential to leadership. “To develop transformational leadership,” Anderson and Adams claim, “we must be transformed” (p. 232). Leaders, in order to develop the inner self which determines external actions, must be guided in the skillful application of intentional efforts and sustained attention toward self-transformation. In navigating the inner self, leaders can become “more self-aware, emotionally intelligent, relationally competent, and systemically wise” (p. 233).

Supporting Leader Development

The existing literature has offered many important insights into leader development, first and foremost, the understanding that the primary source of learning to lead is lived experience (DeRue & Wellman, 2009; McCall, 2010). Paired with this, researchers have identified personal and situational characteristics that contribute to leader development via lived experience, including motivation, learning orientation, and reflection practices (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; DeRue & Wellman, 2009). In addition to examining predictors of leader development, scholars have begun to take cues from adult development literature and expand the narrow focus on knowledge, skills, and abilities to include a wider range of outcomes associated with leadership development such as identity, moral reasoning and epistemic cognition (Day & Harrison, 2007; DeRue & Ashford, 2010).

Leader development is akin to adult development, meaning leaders require experiences that grow their internal capacities and ways of knowing, in order to be better equipped to support and inspire growth in others (Drago-Severson, 2012). In examining the development of the leader, the questions then become: (a) how does a leader perceive herself in relation to the environment including relationships with others and assimilation into cultural norms (identity);

(b) does a leader recognize ethical dilemmas when they occur and act in a manner consistent with values and beliefs (moral reasoning); (c) how does a leader come to know and understand what is happening and discern appropriate actions (epistemic cognition); and (d) how does a leader develop the positionality (motivation, learning orientation) and processes (reflection practices) to learn from experience?

Supporting leadership development, rather than emphasizing specific knowledge, skills, and abilities, must transition to an examination of the cognitive structures and psychological processes underlying leadership, as how someone thinks about leadership will inevitably influence how leadership is enacted (Day et al., 2009). With this view, self-awareness becomes an essential quality of a leader, allowing reflection on identity and actions and facilitating continuous growth and learning (Hall, 2004). Self-regulation also becomes crucial, allowing a leader to exert the cognitive, behavioral and motivational efforts to lead and to develop herself and others (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007). Self-efficacy becomes a further essential tool, allowing a leader to maintain a positive belief in her ability even in challenging situations (London, 2002).

The majority of the capabilities demanded by leadership, as outlined in the review of the leadership literature, have been demonstrated as benefits of mindfulness practice (Jennings, Lantieri, & Roeser, 2012). Relationship satisfaction, empathy development and skillful communication are reported benefits of mindfulness (Gambrel & Keeling, 2010). Mindfulness has also been theorized to positively affect the development of self-control, objectivity, affect tolerance, enhanced flexibility, equanimity, emotional intelligence, kindness, acceptance and compassion (D. M. Davis & Hayes, 2011). As a result of the proven benefits, mindfulness techniques are currently being applied in a wide range of clinical and community contexts as

researchers explore mindfulness practice as a method of improving individual capabilities and functioning.

The following section of this review of the literature examines the historical and contemporary definitions of mindfulness, the practices applied in an effort to cultivate mindfulness, and the mechanisms by which these practices work. This in depth look at the concept of mindfulness will be followed by a discussion of the myriad benefits attributed to mindfulness practice and the resulting applications of mindfulness in organizations and schools. In so doing, the broader benefits of mindfulness practice can be recognized as the development of self-awareness, self-regulation and self-transcendence (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012) and as such, clear connections drawn between mindfulness and leader development.

Mindfulness

Adapted from its 2500-year old origins in Buddhism, mindfulness endures. References to mindfulness are increasingly part of popular culture. Evidence showing the benefits across a diverse range of applications abounds. Yet this journey through a plurality of cultural traditions to a plurality of modern-day applications has resulted in a lack of clarity regarding the term, with the contemporary concept of mindfulness often decontextualized, trivialized, and confused with its goals (Bodhi, 2011; Purser & Loy, 2013). In an effort to secularize mindfulness and allow its benefits to be experienced by a wide range of people, the more researchable and minimalistic versions of the term appear to be missing its true essence (Reb, Narayanan, & Ho, 2015).

This review of the literature on mindfulness will begin with an effort to define the construct from multiple perspectives. A historical view of mindfulness as it is addressed in Buddhist scholarship will be presented, followed by a critical view of the existing mindfulness literature in cognitive and clinical psychology. Proceeding from this exploration of the many

connotations and definitions of the term, the mechanisms of mindfulness and the processes by which it can be cultivated will be examined. Synthesizing the historical and contemporary perspectives of mindfulness with the neurobiological mechanisms by which its benefits are realized, an integrative theoretical model of mindfulness (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012) will be presented. The section concludes with a review of the research from some of the myriad fields exploring the potential benefits of regular mindfulness training, including psychology, health care, organizations and schools.

While personal transformation and ease of suffering are individual intentions of the practice, the path of mindfulness is not solely reserved for the individual. Understood in its broadest sense, mindfulness has social and collective aims. Traditionally, an individual's mindfulness practice has an ethical focus on the well-being of all living things, not solely the self. The following review of relevant literature will underscore that the true aim of mindfulness is a socially responsible way of being, that benefits both the individual and others. Understood in this way, mindfulness offers potential benefits for educational leaders in the development of the leader's own identity and well-being, and in the development of the leader's potential for positive interaction and influence with others.

Integrating Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

The exponential growth of interest in secular applications of mindfulness has led to many issues, challenges and questions, the most fundamental of which is how the term mindfulness is defined (Baer, 2011; Bishop et al., 2004; Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011). In the explosion of academic studies and discussions of mindfulness, particularly in the last decade, it has become apparent that researchers use and define mindfulness in different ways (Gethin, 2011). With such widespread interest and activity in the study of mindfulness and its potential applications,

clarification of the nature of mindfulness has been a pursuit of many researchers (Baer, 2011; K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Chiesa, 2013; Solloway & Fisher, 2007), and is being articulated as absolutely necessary “for the deepening and flourishing of the field as a whole” (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011).

Some of the confusion regarding the definition of mindfulness stems from the ability of the term to denote different things in different circumstances. The term mindfulness can be used to refer to a trait, a state, a practice, or a prescribed intervention (R. D. Siegel, Germer, & Olendzki, 2008). One can experience a *state* of mindfulness in a given moment, or, with self-induced or *prescribed* intentional formal *practice* of mindfulness, one can develop an automatic, general, long-term *trait* of mindfulness. Davis (2012) stated, “One of the difficulties in attempting to define mindfulness is that it cannot be easily placed in any one distinct conceptual framework or category such as ‘method’, ‘perspective’, ‘experience’ or ‘cognitive process’; mindfulness traverses all of these concepts” (p. 31). A critical first step for scholars studying the concept is to clearly define mindfulness given the potential for the term to cover so many varied elements (Choi & Leroy, 2015).

Mindfulness has travelled a long way from its homeland in northeast India. It has journeyed to the island of Sri Lanka, the river basins of southeast Asia, the mountain monasteries of China, Korea and Japan, and the hermitages of the Himalayan kingdoms. But the last lap of its journey is without parallel. Today, Buddhist meditation has been lifted from its traditional setting in Buddhist doctrine and faith and transplanted in a secularized culture bent on pragmatic results (Bodhi, 2011, p. 35).

In the journey across Buddhist schools (Batchelor, 2011; Bodhi, 2011; J. Dunne, 2011; Olendzki, 2011), between Buddhist tradition and contemporary Western science (Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin,

2011; Grossman & Van Dam, 2011), among Western researchers (Baer et al., 2008; Bishop et al., 2004; Hayes & Shenk, 2004; Rosch, 2007) and even within individual scholars (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, 2003, 2011), multiple attempts have been made to denote all that is meant by the term mindfulness. Of the various attempts, perhaps the most frequently cited is that of Kabat-Zinn (2003) who described mindfulness as “the awareness that emerges from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (p. 145).

Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) definition and similar definitions that have been proposed in scientific and clinical interpretations (Baer et al., 2008; Bishop et al., 2004), however, are critiqued for not being fully aligned with the concept of mindfulness from the Classical Buddhist tradition (Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011; Gunarantana, 1992; Olendzki, 2011; Wallace & Shapiro, 2006). Many fear the decontextualizing of mindfulness from its original foundation and transformative purpose, what some refer to as the “McMindfulness” trend (Purser & Loy, 2013), may lead to a denaturing of the practice and failure to realize its full potential. Respecting the religious tradition in which mindfulness is rooted, a deeper understanding of the concept can be gained by examining its Classical Buddhist origins.

Buddhist definitions of mindfulness. Rhys Davids is reported to have been the first to translate the Buddhist term *sati* with the English word mindfulness (Bodhi, 2011; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011). Examining multiple translated texts by Rhys Davids, *sati* is also described by the terms “mental activity,” “thought,” and “earnest meditations” (Gethin, 2011, p. 264), yet mindfulness is the translation used most consistently. Etymologically mindfulness is said to mean “memory” (Bodhi, 2011, p. 23), “to remember and keep in mind” (Dreyfus, 2011, p. 45), and “recollection” (Gethin, 2011, p. 263), however, *sati* is better understood more broadly,

scholars suggest, as a combination of “memory, recollection, calling to mind, being aware of” (Bodhi, 2011, p. 23; Gethin, 2011, p. 265). The Monier-Williams Sanskrit dictionary offers the possible meanings “thinking of or upon” and “calling to mind” (Gethin, 2015, p. 11). It is suggested that the “memory” represented by *sati* is more akin to the idea of working memory than long-term memory (J. H. Davis & Thompson, 2015; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2015). This understanding of *sati* provides insight as to the frequent use of the terms “attention” and “awareness” in contemporary definitions of mindfulness.

Mindfulness, the keeping or holding an object of awareness in mind, is joined by five further mental qualities that function in the act of awareness: attention, concentration, application of thought, examining and understanding. Gethin (2015) explained:

attention refers to the mind’s turning toward the object of awareness in each moment of consciousness; *concentration*, to the mind’s various mental capacities, qualities, and emotions becoming unified and resting, either momentarily or for a longer period, on a single object of awareness; *application of thought*, to the mind’s deliberately and actively thinking about the object; *examining*, to the mind’s careful examination of the different aspects of an object; and *understanding*, to the mind’s forming some understanding of the value or significance of the object (pp. 23-24).

The conceptualization of mindfulness in Buddhism is further expanded upon in the four applications of mindfulness. In the Pali Canon, a preservation of the discourses and sermons of the Buddha, mindfulness is consistently described as a systematic series of practices: “Here, a monk dwells in contemplating the body in the body . . . feelings in feelings . . . mind in mind . . . phenomena in phenomena, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world” (Bodhi, 2011, p. 21). From the traditional

scriptures, aspects of mindfulness can be deduced as: (a) the contemplation of one's own experience and (b) a collection of mental factors applied to this contemplative effort. Olendzki (2011) commented on the distinction between these two aspects stating, "*What* is cognized with consciousness is one thing; *how* it is cognized, that is to say with what quality of mind it is cognized, is something else" (p. 57).

Attention to the body is elaborated in suggested exercises such as observing the breath; bringing awareness to walking, standing, sitting or lying; and paying attention in everyday activities eating, drinking, walking, speaking. Feelings are attended to as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. The mind is examined for desire, aversion or delusion. Awareness of the presence of qualities of enlightenment is brought to bear, as well as the presence of qualities that obstruct meditation (Gethin, 2015).

In addition to the four applications of mindfulness, the Buddha encouraged followers to cultivate what are called the "four great efforts," translated from his teachings as follows:

Here, a monk rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind, and strives to prevent the arising of unarisen, evil, unwholesome mental states. He rouses his will . . . and strives to overcome evil unwholesome mental states that have arisen. He rouses his will . . . and strives to produce unarisen, wholesome mental states. He rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind, and strives to maintain wholesome mental states that have arisen, not let them fade away, to bring them to greater growth (Digha Nikaya, 1987, p. 22 cited in Batchelor, 2011, p. 159).

The sometimes explicitly evaluative nature of attention, differentiated in Buddhist texts as "right" mindfulness and "wrong" mindfulness (Bodhi, 2011, p. 26), is one of the central features of mindfulness in traditional definitions.

The practice of mindfulness is described in Buddhist texts as a path to the cessation of suffering, and as a combination of a set of mental qualities developed through meditation (Analayo, 2003; Gethin, 2015), illustrated in Figure 1. Suffering is believed to result from characteristics of self-importance or self-loathing, which are derived from a habitual attachment or aversion to objects and the lack of awareness that all phenomena are impermanent

In order to reduce suffering, meditation practice develops four qualities (*satipatthanas*): (a) a balanced application of effort (*atapi*); (b) clear comprehension (*sampajanna*); (c) mindful awareness (*sati*), and (d) freedom from desire and discontent (*samadhi*) (Bodhi, 2011; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011). These qualities are applied toward the body, toward feelings, toward the mind and toward experiential phenomena, over time, allowing the practitioner to see and experience things as they really are (Chiesa, 2013).

Mindfulness is one of over thirty qualities contributing to enlightenment, according to Buddhist tradition (Gethin, 2011; Olendzki, 2011). It is included in the five basic faculties of faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. Mindfulness joins investigation, vigor, joy, tranquility, concentration, and equanimity to form the seven constituents of awakening. It is one of the elements of the eightfold path of right view, right intent, right action, right speech, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. While holding a prominent place in the path to enlightenment, there is no indication in Buddhist texts that mindfulness is the central key, nor any indication that these qualities can be considered mutually exclusive (Gethin, 2015; Maex, 2011)

Rosch (2007) explained the danger in attempting to condense a concept as complex as mindfulness into a simple definition, stating, “Far from a simple technique or type of consciousness that we might call mindfulness, we are dealing with an entire mode of knowing

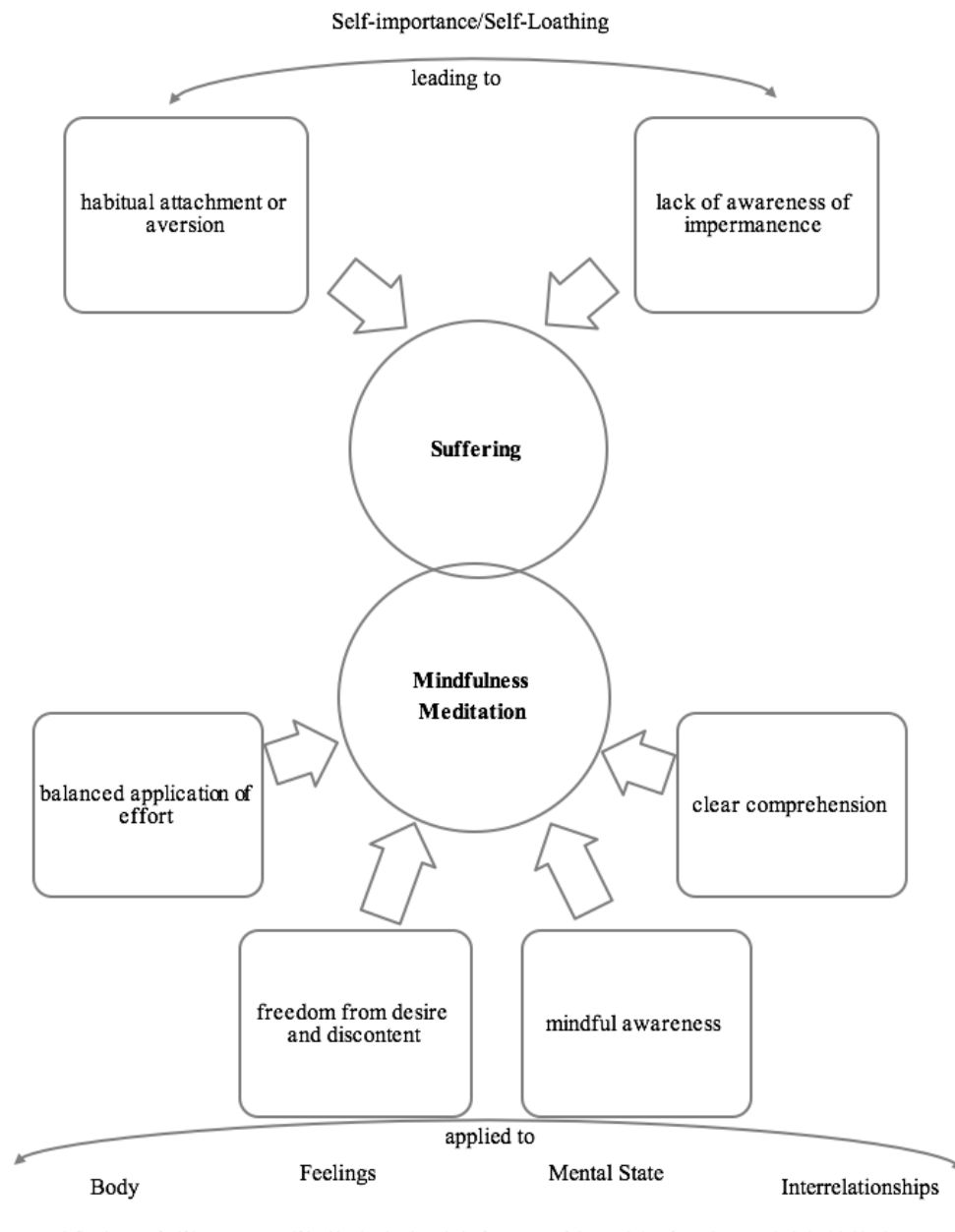


Figure 1. Buddhist conceptualization of mindfulness. An inflated sense of self-importance or self-loathing is related to a lack of awareness of characteristics of experience, particularly a) habitual attachment or aversion to sensory or mental objects, and b) the impermanence of all phenomena, which leads to suffering. The path of mindfulness reduces suffering by developing qualities of a) balanced application of effort and diligence; b) clear discernment and wisdom of clarity; c) mindful awareness, and d) freedom from desire and discontent. In concert with the other three qualities, mindful awareness develops over time allowing the being to perceive experiences as they truly are (Analayo, 2003; Wallace & Shapiro, 2006; Bodhi, 2011; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011; Chiesa, 2013).

and of being in the world composed of many interdependent synergistic facets which are simultaneously ways of entering the whole and themselves part of the enlightened awareness itself” (p. 261). In fact, no single concept of mindfulness exists among the various Buddhist traditions (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011; Lutz, Jha, Dunne, & Saron, 2015), further illustrating the challenge in defining the term.

The variety of Buddhist interpretations. The definition of mindfulness has evolved over time, across a plurality of cultural traditions (Gethin, 2015). Buddhism exhibits diversity in its many manifestations across cultures, and any attempt to discuss a singular Buddhist tradition, philosophy and practice would be misleading (J. H. Davis & Thompson, 2015; J. Dunne, 2011). In the absence of one true Buddhism, there is also the absence of one true definition of mindfulness (Gethin, 2011). Gethin (2015) identified three areas of tension in various Buddhist conceptualizations of mindfulness: (a) its relationship to memory; (b) its relationship to conceptual and discursive thinking; and (c) its relationship to wholesome and unwholesome states of mind.

Though there are many traditions and lineages of Buddhism, Dunne (2015) suggested the practice styles and theories can be sorted into two main categories: Classical, rooted in the earliest texts (*Abhidharma*), and Nondual, later styles emerging in India and spreading to Tibet, China, Korea and Japan. The Nondual practices characterize true awareness as “non-dual” in that the false distinction between self and the world, or subject and object, disappears. Concepts and thoughts are understood as mental representations, or features of consciousness, rather than experienced as the objects they represent.

Classical Buddhism takes a more constructivist view, with the path of mindfulness involving cultivation of qualities leading to awakening. Nondual Buddhism, on the other hand,

takes an innatist view, with the path of mindfulness involving the elimination of obscurities that prevent one's innate state of awakening from emerging (J. Dunne, 2011; Gethin, 2015).

Traditions and individuals do not fall neatly into one of these two categories, however, with features of varying practices falling along a spectrum between these poles (J. Dunne, 2011; J. D. Dunne, 2015).

By no means exhaustive, the list of proposed definitions by Buddhist scholars offered in Table 2 illustrates the diversity of perspectives regarding what the term mindfulness implies. Key differences noted in the proposed definitions include the interchangeable use of attention and awareness, and the inclusion or exclusion of a particular attitude or evaluative stance. This variety in definitions can be tied to the evolution of Buddhism, from India to Asia and beyond, resulting in different schools of thought (Sedlmeier et al., 2012) which emphasize varied characteristics of mindfulness (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b). These differing interpretations of mindfulness are further compounded by the new, contemporary applications and understandings of the term, which in many cases draw from both ends of the Buddhism spectrum as well as other contemplative traditions (Kabat-Zinn, 2011).

Mirroring the diversity of Buddhist conceptualizations is the diversity of perspectives on the meaning of mindfulness in contemporary Western science. Buddhist scholars contend that contemporary Western descriptions of mindfulness are more equivalent to practical instruction than theoretical conception (Quaglia, Goodman, & Brown, 2015). The attempts of Western scientific researchers to isolate and manipulate single factors of mindfulness has been compared to "killing a rabbit and dissecting it to look for its aliveness" (Rosch, 2007, p. 263). Carmody (2015) suggested the disagreements regarding the definition of mindfulness are the result of the transfer of this term from the "non-Western fully formed religious system of Buddhism" to serve

Table 2

The Variety of Buddhist Interpretations of Mindfulness

Definition	Source
the lucid awareness of the phenomenal field	Bodhi, 2011, p. 26
the practice of retentive focus that leads to a deeper understanding of the changing nature of one's bodily and mental states so as to free our mind from the habits and tendencies that bind us to suffering	Dreyfus, 2011, p. 51
being aware of our present moment's experience and relating to that experience without grasping, aversion or delusion	Salzberg, 2011, p. 178
an alert participation in the ongoing process of living	Gunaratana, 2002, p. 142
the cultivation of attention and experiential inquiry characterized by calmness and clarity	Batchelor, 2011, p. 164
keeping one's consciousness alive to the present reality	Hanh, 1976, p. 11
the clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens to us and in us at the successive moments of perception	Nayanaponika Thera, 1972, p. 5 cited in Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822
not mentally losing a familiar object, in effect non-distraction	Yogacara commentaries, fourth century, cited in Gethin, 2015, p. 21
that by which the qualities that constitute the mind remember; the absence of forgetting; steady perception	Theravada commentaries (fourth century), cited in Gethin, 2015, p. 20

“secular Western, scientific, psychoeducational and clinical purposes” (p. 62).

Contemporary definitions of mindfulness. First introduced into behavioral medicine in the 1970s (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), interest in applications of mindfulness has spread to many disciplines including clinical psychology, cognitive therapy, neuroscience, education, law, business and leadership (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011). Proposed definitions of mindfulness from Western scientific sources reflect the varying contexts in which the concept has been applied, and exhibit a range of conceptual difficulties and differences similar to that experienced by Buddhist scholars. Illustrated in Table 3, definitions noticeably use the terms attention, awareness and consciousness interchangeably, and there is recognizable disagreement regarding the inclusion of a specific characterization of attention/awareness/consciousness.

Of particular note is Langer’s (1989) use of the term mindfulness, applied specifically to educational contexts and the act of learning. The objects of Langer’s conception of mindfulness are external to the practitioner, usually information to be learned or problems to be solved, rather than the meditation based conception which focuses on open observation of internal and external experience (Baer, 2003; K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003). Langer’s definition is one of a cognitive process rather than a contemplative one, and is far removed from the traditional Buddhist roots of the term.

Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) frequently cited definition, “the awareness that emerges from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (p. 145), is criticized by some Buddhist scholars for its failure to recognize the central features of mindfulness, including its relevance to the past as well as the present, and its sometimes explicitly evaluative nature (Bodhi, 2011; Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011). In defense of his definition Kabat-Zinn (Kabat-Zinn, 2011) explained, “from the

Table 3

The Variety of Contemporary Definitions of Mindfulness

Definition	Source
the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment	Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145
a kind of non-elaborative, nonjudgmental, present-centered awareness characterized by curiosity, openness and acceptance	Bishop et al., 2004, p. 232
a dispassionate, non-evaluative and sustained moment-to-moment awareness of perceptive mental states and processes	Grossman et al., 2004, p. 36
a receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experience	Brown et al., 2007, p. 212
paying attention to one's present experience without clinging to it or rejecting it	Leary & Tate, 2007, p. 251
the quality of mind that one recollects continuously without forgetfulness or distraction while maintaining attention on a particular object	Desbordes et al., 2015, p. 3
a process of actively making new distinctions about objects in one's awareness, that cultivates sensitivity to subtle variations in context and perspective about the observed subject	Langer, 2005, p. 1115
the tendency to be highly aware of one's internal and external experiences in the context of an accepting, nonjudgmental stance toward those experiences	Cardaciotto et al., 2008
to adhere, in a moment of consciousness, to the object of consciousness with a clear mental focus	Rosch, 2007, p. 259
to be aware of one's attachments and intentions in relation to phenomena in consciousness as they emerge	Hirst, 2003, p. 360
bringing one's complete attention in an accepting way on the experience occurring in the present moment (citing Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1990;1994; Linehan, 1993)	Baer et al., 2004;2006
a state of consciousness which involves attending to one's moment-to-moment experience (citing Brown & Ryan, 2003)	Shapiro et al., 2006

beginning of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), I bent over backward to structure it and find ways to speak about it that avoided as much as possible the risk of it being seen as Buddhist” (p. 282). In order to present an evidence-based, legitimate program that would be embraced and cultivated in secular settings, the Buddhist origins of mindfulness were admittedly understated, and an instrumental and operational emphasis on what is involved in the practice of mindfulness drove the development of the definition.

In addition to taking influence from Classical Buddhist teachings, Kabat-Zinn was also admittedly influenced by Zen Buddhism and other contemplative traditions including Yoga (Kabat-Zinn, 2011). His use of the term mindfulness was applied as an umbrella term covering the many varied techniques employed in the range of Buddhist traditions. This may perhaps explain the present-centered, non-judgmental descriptors included in his definition and in the many operational definitions that have followed, which are reflective of Nondual Buddhist perspectives of mindfulness, but at the same time called into question by Classical Buddhist scholars (Bodhi, 2011; Dreyfus, 2011; J. Dunne, 2011; Gethin, 2011).

The three areas of tension Gethin (2015) identified in various Buddhist conceptualizations of mindfulness have similarly been identified when comparing Classical Buddhist definitions to contemporary definitions (J. D. Dunne, 2015). These areas of tension, repeated from the previous discussion, are: (a) the relationship of mindfulness to memory; (b) the relationship of mindfulness to conceptual and discursive thinking; and (c) the relationship of mindfulness to wholesome and unwholesome states of mind (Gethin, 2015). Although mindfulness is not understood as “memory” in the literal sense by Classical Buddhist scholars, the practice does recognize past and future as part of a practitioner’s mental life. In the context

of contemporary definitions, however, remaining in the present-moment is considered crucially important.

In contrast to Classical Buddhist definitions, contemporary Western science conceptualizations of mindfulness often lack an ethical emphasis. While compassion meditation may be part of the prescribed intervention techniques, values such as those central to Classical Buddhist practices are generally not presented in modern secular applications (J. Dunne, 2011). This is often based on an assumption that individuals will address ethical issues from their own perspectives, leaving room for a variety of religious and spiritual interpretations (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Similarly, where contemporary definitions often promote a non-judgmental approach, Classical Buddhist practice requires the employment of judgment connected to ethics, in distinguishing wholesome from unwholesome thoughts, feelings or experiences (Quaglia et al., 2015).

Contemporary definitions are aligned with Nondual Buddhist conceptualizations of mindfulness in their encouragement of present-centered, direct attention to what is appearing in the mind and of letting go of thought as thought without expectation or evaluation (J. D. Dunne, 2015). Where contemporary conceptualizations differ entirely from Buddhist theoretical foundations is in the “between sessions” application of mindfulness. It is the expectation in both Classical and Nondual Buddhist traditions that the practitioner adopt mindful capacities in contexts outside of formal practice, and the cultivation of qualities in formal practice is intended toward a way of being in the world.

The variety of operational definitions. The introduction of mindfulness to Western science transformed it into an object of investigation, requiring reliable and valid measures (Grossman & Van Dam, 2011). Building on the work of Kabat-Zinn, traditional mindfulness

meditation practices were incorporated into several medical and mental health settings, and the differences in definitions might be attributed to the varying contexts in which research has been conducted. Definitions and operationalizations have been colored by the particular clinical perspectives researchers have applied and by the outcomes they sought, with some investigators attempting to uncover mechanisms of action and others looking to demonstrate effectiveness of interventions (Lutz et al., 2015). In an effort to better understand mindfulness and make it empirically measureable, researchers have made multiple attempts to identify distinct factors. Table 4 illustrates the breadth and complexity of mindfulness as defined by eight scales designed to measure the state or trait.

Fundamental differences can be noted in the definitions, the most obvious in the range of factors included from a narrow, singular view of mindfulness as attention (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003), to a perspective determining five separate facets within the construct (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, J., & Toney, 2006). Based on their review of the many self-report measures that have been developed, Bergomi, Tschacher, and Kupper (2013) determined nine distinguishable aspects of mindfulness present in the differing definitions including: (a) observing, attending to experiences; (b) acting with awareness, (c) non-judgment, acceptance of experiences, (d) self-acceptance, (e) openness to experiences, non-avoidance, (f) non-reactivity to experience, (g) non-identification with experience, (h) insight, and (i) labeling, describing (p. 5). The diversity in factor structures evident in Table 4 clearly indicates a lack of consensus about what mindfulness is. These varying concepts of mindfulness differ so much, in fact, that though the scales are all designed to measure the same construct, they are often uncorrelated with each other (Carmody, Baer, Lykins, & Olendzki, 2009; Grossman, 2008).

Table 4

The Variety of Operational Definitions of Mindfulness

Factors	Source
(1) decentered awareness of cognitions as mental events (2) allowing attention to remain with difficult cognitions (3) accepting difficult thoughts, images and oneself (4) letting difficult cognitions pass without reacting	Southampton Mindfulness Questionnaire (SMQ) Chadwick, Hember, Symes, Peters, Kuipers & Dagnan, 2008
(1) mindful presence (2) nonjudgmental acceptance (3) openness to experience (4) insight	Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI) Buchheld, Grossman & Walach, 2001
(1) open, undivided observation of internal and external stimuli (attention-awareness)	Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) Brown & Ryan, 2003
(1) observing (2) describing (3) acting with awareness (4) accepting without judgment	Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness (KIMS) Baer, Smith & Allen, 2004
(1) attention regulation (2) present moment orientation (3) awareness of experience (4) nonjudgmental stance (acceptance)	Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale Revised (CAMS-R) Fedman, Hayes, Kimar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2006
(1) awareness (2) acceptance	Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale (PHLMS) Cardaciotto, Hebert, Forman, Moitra, & Farrow, 2008
(1) observing (2) describing (3) acting with awareness (4) non-judging of experience (5) non-reactivity to inner experience	Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006
(1) present awareness (2) accepting, nonreactive and insightful orientation (3) describing of experiences (4) open, non-avoidant orientation	Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences (CHIME- β), Gergomi, Tschacher & Kupper, 2013

Some of the difficulty in defining mindfulness, it seems, is that when faced with the challenge to accurately describe the phenomenon, many have incorporated as elements of the definition practices or behaviors leading to mindfulness or outcomes of mindfulness (K. W. Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007a; K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Quaglia et al., 2015). Describing mindfulness by addressing its preconditions, or by indicating specific practices, or by including how these practices affect health and well-being, does not, in fact, clarify what mindfulness itself is. Despite numerous differences, however, there is clearly agreement between and within Buddhist scholarship and Western science that mindfulness refers to attention to experience in the present moment (Grossman, 2008).

As stated in the Definition of Terms, mindfulness, for the purposes of this study, will be conceptually defined as the state of enhanced, sustained attention to and awareness of what is taking place in the present (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003). This definition denotes that mindfulness is the process of maintaining attention on whatever is happening in the moment, whether the mind is focused internally on bodily sensations or thoughts, or on a memory from the past, or externally on a particular stimulus or object (Dreyfus, 2011), thus maintaining the traditional Buddhist view that mindfulness is one of many different states, abilities and qualities of the mind. An operational definition will result from the following discussion of meditation and the mechanisms by which mindfulness functions.

Practices cultivating mindfulness. Mindfulness, in the historical Buddhist texts and in contemporary applications, is cultivated through meditation practices. Although generally considered the primary method for training mindfulness, there are inconsistencies in the types and relative amounts of meditation prescribed by various Buddhist styles and by various contemporary mindfulness-based interventions (van Vugt, 2015). There are varying perspectives

regarding the exact processes composing meditation (J. Dunne, 2011), as many distinct practices utilize different techniques and are aimed at different goals (Awasthi, 2013).

Etymologically, the term meditation (*bhavana*) suggests cultivation or becoming, and generally refers to practices involving attention training techniques aimed at mental development (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Cultivating loving-kindness, cultivating a settled state of mind, cultivating deep familiarity with the nature of the mind, and cultivating virtue are examples of the range of practices the term meditation may refer to (J. H. Davis & Thompson, 2015). In traditional Buddhist practice, the different contemplations can be combined in a variety of ways. Similarly, Western approaches to meditative practices differ as follows:

in the mental faculties they use (e. g., attention, feeling, reasoning, visualization, memory, bodily awareness), in how these faculties are used (e. g., actively, passively, effortlessly, forcefully) and the objects to which these faculties are directed (e. g., thoughts, images, concepts, internal energy, aspect of the body, love) (Sedlmeier et al., 2012, p. 1141)

Although there are many styles of meditation practice, early Buddhist texts suggest two main intentions: calm and insight (Dhiman, 2009). Calm meditation refers to cultivation of deep states of concentration on an object, while insight meditation refers to cultivation of understanding of mental and physical phenomena as impermanent and not self (Gethin, 2015). These intentions have also been described as “bare attention” and “clear comprehension” (Nyanaponika Thera, 1968). Contemporary discussions of meditation also tend to distinguish between two goals: focused attention and open monitoring (Lutz, Slagter, Dunne, & Davidson, 2008; Travis & Shear, 2010). Similar to the traditional Buddhist distinctions, focused attention, like calm meditation, refers to sustained attention on a chosen object, while open monitoring,

like insight meditation, refers to sustained attention on the content of experience as a means of recognizing the nature of one's emotional and cognitive patterns (J. H. Davis & Thompson, 2015).

Open monitoring techniques encourage observation of thoughts as they arise, sometimes suggesting the practitioner engage in labeling of thoughts using terms such as “planning,” “thinking,” “remembering,” or “judging.” Focused attention techniques suggest the direction of attention on a specific object of focus, for example, the breath, disengaging from thoughts that arise in the mind and counteracting mind-wandering by continually bringing the attention back to the breath (J. H. Davis & Thompson, 2015; Sedlmeier et al., 2012). In addition to these differences in intention, there is a further component of attitude that may vary within meditation practice. Kabat-Zinn (1990) described seven possible attitudes that may be applied to meditation: non-judging, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance and letting go (p. 33).

Nash and Newberg (2013) proposed a conceptual model of meditation which combines the various forms and illustrates the dynamic process as progressing through a series of stages, shown in Figure 2. From a normal state of consciousness (N), the meditator makes a willful intention to begin (IB), employing certain preliminaries (P) as the surrounding environment and physical body are prepared for the meditative session. A particular method (M) is then enacted, as the meditator follows a prescribed set of instructions containing various cognitive strategies. Through these strategies, the meditator usually achieves a shift in consciousness, resulting in an enhanced mental state (EMS). Eventually, the meditator makes a willful intention to finish (IF), and returns to a normal state of consciousness.

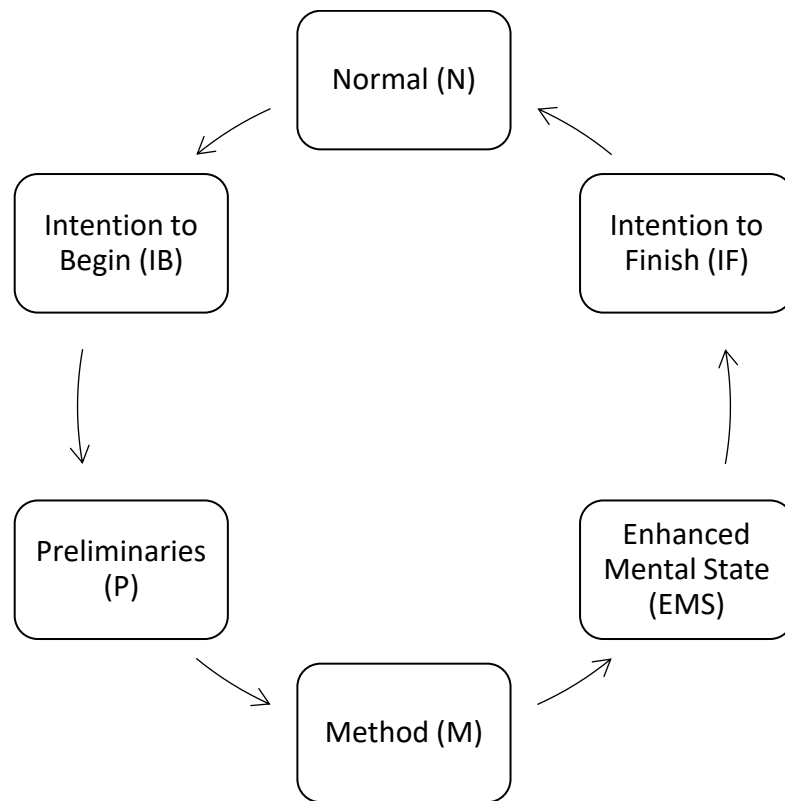


Figure 2. Stages of the meditation process. N = normal state of consciousness; IB = intention to begin; P = preliminaries; M = method; EMS = enhanced mental state; IF = intention to finish; CDM = cognitive directed methods; ADM = affective directed methods; NDM = null-directed methods; ECS = enhanced cognitive state; EAS = enhanced affective state; NC/NA = non-cognitive/non-affective state. Adapted from “Toward a Unifying Taxonomy and Definition for Meditation” by J. D. Nash and A. Newberg, 2013, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, p. 1. Copyright 2013 by Frontiers Media.

Included in the model is a proposed taxonomy of meditation methods that may be employed in the process: Affective (ADM), Null (NDM), and Cognitive (CDM). Affective methods include those such as compassion or loving-kindness meditation, directed at enhancing one's affective state (EAS). Null methods, including transcendental meditation, are aimed at releasing the mind from a sense of self and achieving a non-cognitive or non-affective state (NC/NA), or what has been referred to as "pure consciousness" (p. 8). Cognitive methods are those seeking insight or concentration, with the intention of producing an enhanced cognitive state (ECS). Referring back to the discussion of styles of meditation practice, both open monitoring and focused attention would fall under this Cognitive domain.

Working from a similar intention to provide a tool that enables the exploration of various styles and stages of mindfulness practice, Lutz et al (2015) proposed a three-dimensional phenomenological matrix elicited by the question, "When one is engaged in a formal mindfulness practice, what observable, instructable, and manipulable features of experience are most relevant to training in mindfulness? (p. 637). The authors determined the three primary dimensions of practice to be object orientation, dereification and meta-awareness. These dimensions are considered the main targets of mindfulness training and the factors which distinguish the different styles.

In the Lutz et al (2015) model, object orientation refers to the degree to which one's mental state is oriented toward a particular object, whether arising through perception, memory or imagination. A high magnitude of object orientation would occur in focused attention meditation, whereas a low magnitude would occur with open monitoring. Dereification refers to the degree to which one's mental cognitions are interpreted as mental events as opposed to accurate representations of reality. A high magnitude of dereification would occur in open

monitoring meditation, where the practitioner is capable of engaging flexibly with thoughts as they come to mind. A low magnitude, therefore, would occur when thoughts present themselves vividly and elicit physical or emotional responses, such as when a memory induces stress or thoughts of food induce salivation. Meta-awareness refers to the degree to which one's attention is directed toward noting the contents of awareness. A high magnitude would occur when the state of sustained attention can be held amidst the context, background, and self-related distractions which occur. A low magnitude would occur when a practitioner is unable to detect disturbances in attention, or when disturbances develop into full distractions and result in episodes of mind-wandering.

Lutz et al (2015) further clarified the three primary dimensions of object orientation, derefication and meta-awareness by four secondary qualities of aperture, clarity, stability and effort. These secondary qualities reflect the relevant features of the experience and the qualities targeted by the provided instruction. Aperture refers to the broadness of the scope of attention, from the narrow focus of attention on the breath, to the wide open focus of open monitoring. Clarity refers to the vividness of the contents of awareness, while stability refers to the consistency of the targeted state of awareness. Stability is not meant to indicate that one's contents of awareness are unchanging, but instead refers to the maintenance of the given intention for the practice. One can still achieve high stability, for example, in open monitoring meditation where thoughts and sensations are changing moment-by-moment. Effort refers to how easy or difficult it is to sustain attention, with high effort indicating deliberate control is needed, and low effort indicating that that state requires little deliberate control to be retained.

An integrated framework for understanding mindfulness. In addition to the models of meditation proposed by Nash and Newberg (2013) and Lutz et al (2015), further theoretical

accounts have attempted to consolidate the existing empirical literature with a growing body of neuroscience related to meditation practice in order to more fully describe both the processes of mindfulness and its benefits. Despite the varying styles, forms and practices of meditation, there is agreement that mindfulness meditation is a process leading to enhanced self-regulation (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Holzel, Lazar, et al., 2011; Tang, Holzel, & Posner, 2015).

From both Buddhist and contemporary Western conceptualizations of mindfulness, a common belief is that the root of suffering lies in the way we view and understand the world. Mindfulness practice, therefore, is conceived as a transformational process, in that it changes how an individual perceives and relates to the world. The assumption is that in directing focused attention to the body, emotions, mind and experience, we can see things in a different way, as physical and mental qualities and phenomena that are impermanent. Through a combination of this change in perspective, and increased attention regulation, body awareness and emotion regulation, mindfulness meditation practice produces cognitive, affective and interpersonal benefits (Holzel et al., 2011)

In order to understand the construct and its possible benefits, it has been suggested that a framework which (a) honors the Buddhist philosophical roots; (b) provides a clear conceptualization that translates to practical use in everyday life; and (c) serves as a foundation for developing further hypothesis about the relationship between mindfulness and well-being is necessary (Carmody, 2015). Vago and Silbersweig (2012) offer one such framework, integrating theoretical and neurobiological explanations of the mechanisms with the benefits of mindfulness, illustrated in Figure 3.

An operational definition of mindfulness as suggested by this framework is “systematic mental training that develops meta-awareness (self-awareness), an ability to effectively modulate

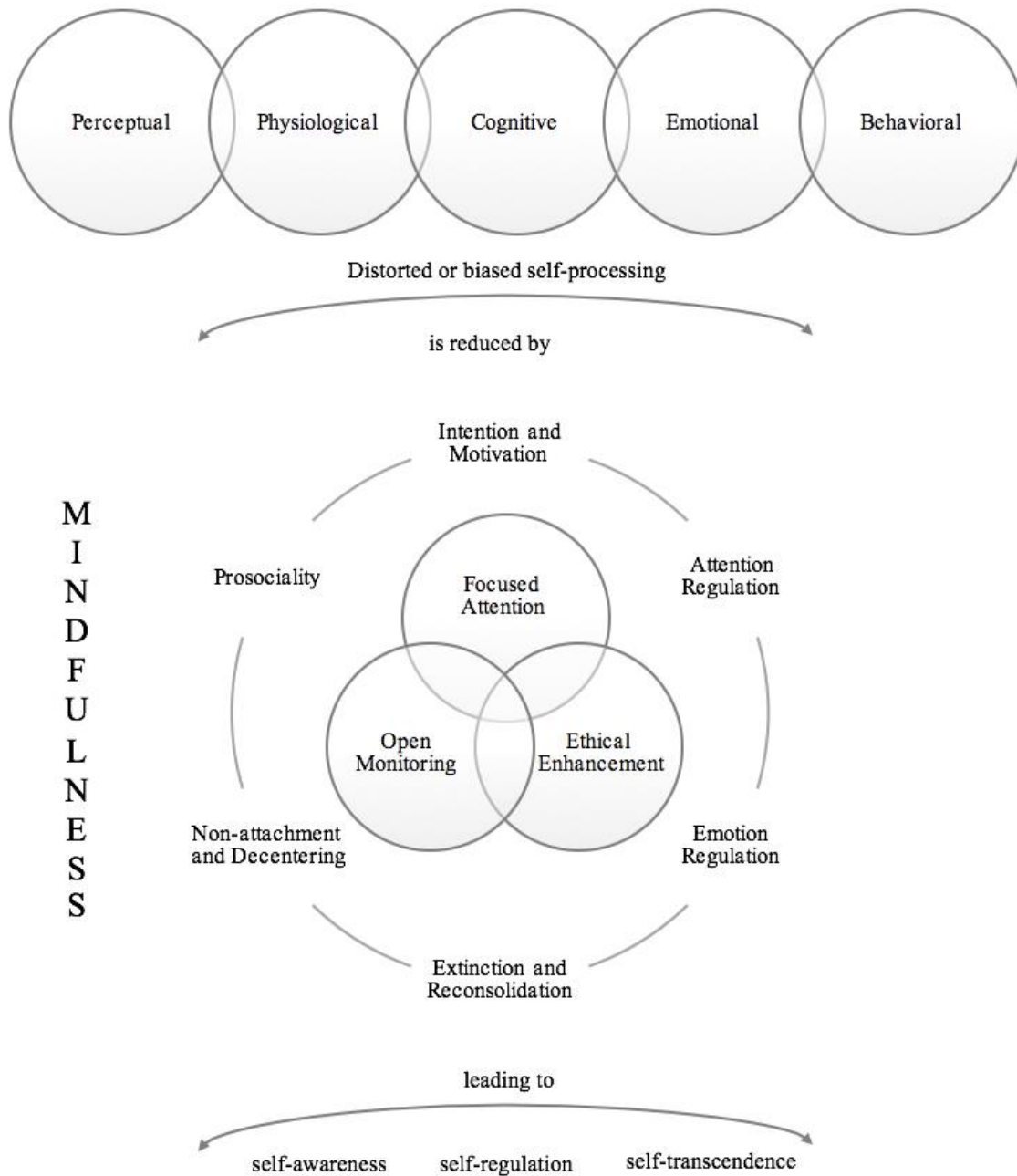


Figure 3. The neurobiological mechanisms of mindfulness. Adapted from “Self-awareness, Self-regulation, and Self-transcendence (S-ART): A Framework for Understanding the Neurobiological Mechanisms of Mindfulness” by D. R. Vago and D. A. Silbersweig, 2012, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 6, p. 1. Copyright 2012 by Frontiers Media.

one's behavior (self-regulation), and a positive relationship between self and other than transcends self-focused needs and increases prosocial characteristics (self-transcendence)" (p. 1). The changes in the structure and function of the brain induced by meditation that have been noted in neuroscience studies offer new perspective and evidence toward the proposed benefits of the practice. Based on the current literature investigating neurobiological substrates of mindfulness, it has been suggested that mindfulness may change the function, structure and connectivity of the brain (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012).

Neuroplasticity, the ability to change one's own brain, indicates that skills and capacities can be cultivated and fostered (Holzel et al., 2011; Lutz et al., 2008; Tang et al., 2015). As outlined by Vago and Silbersweig (2012), mindfulness is described to reduce biases related to self-processing through six neuropsychological processes including intention and motivation, attention regulation, emotion regulation, extinction and reconsolidation, prosociality, non-attachment, and decentering. The idea that each of the neuropsychological processes could be enhanced through mindfulness practice has led to interest in mindfulness applications from various fields. The discussion will now turn toward a deeper examination of these neuropsychological processes before transitioning to a review of the literature exploring the applications of mindfulness.

The Benefits of Mindfulness Practice

Evidence suggests that mindfulness practice can result in enduring changes across the self-specific networks of the brain (Chiesa, Calati, & Serretti, 2011; Holzel, Carmody, et al., 2011; Lutz et al., 2008). Affective, Null, and Cognitive meditative practices (Nash & Newberg, 2013) affect one's relationship to thought and emotion, as over time and with continued practice, meta-awareness is cultivated and clarity and equanimity increase (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). In

strengthening neuropsychological processes, mindfulness practice modulates self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence, creating a healthier mind.

Intention and motivation. Intention and motivation establish the foundation out of which the cultivation of mindfulness may emerge. Initial motivation and intention to practice meditation are highly variable and unique to the individual. Through continued practice, however, motivation and intention are proposed to become more internally driven (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Research has shown that more intrinsic forms of motivation are correlated with greater well-being, better performance at tasks, and higher quality relationships (Deci, Ryan, Schultz, & Niemiec, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2001). When autonomously motivated, people tend to have increased awareness and openness to experience, and tend to live more fully, deeply satisfying lives (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Intrinsic intentions are also linked to well-being and satisfaction of basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci et al., 2015).

Attention regulation. Mindfulness is proposed to increase the efficiency and stability of aspects of attention including orienting, alerting and conflict monitoring (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Orienting refers to bringing attention to a particular object. Alerting refers to one's ability to detect distractions, while conflict monitoring refers to the ability to prioritize among conflicting stimuli, disengaging from distractions and redirecting attention to intended objects (Lutz et al., 2008; van Vugt, 2015). Benefits of meditation for attention include improved ability to focus on a single stimulus, as well as non-attachment to perceptual stimuli, increasing the ease of switching between targets of attention (van Vugt, 2015). With experience, mindfulness practitioners are able to sustain attention for longer periods of time, and allocate attention more effectively (Lutz et al., 2008).

Emotion regulation. Considerable research has contributed to growing evidence that the cultivation of mindfulness results in emotional benefits (Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009). The openness to experience promoted by mindfulness practice is believed to provide emotional exposure (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Holzel, Lazar, et al., 2011), allowing for repeated and sustained contact with the full range of emotions (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). It is hypothesized that this repeated exposure may modify emotional appraisal, reducing the threat of aversive experiences and modifying the emotional response, increasing the capacity to cope with emotions. Greater emotional clarity, openness to aversive experience, less suppression of and defensive response to negative emotion, more effective processing of emotion, and a more consistent positive affect are all demonstrated benefits of mindfulness meditation (Arch & Landy, 2015).

Extinction and reconsolidation. The practice of mindfulness has been proposed to reduce top-down, automatic processing and minimize the perceptual, emotional and cognitive mechanisms that filter experience and restrict one's perception to habitual, ingrained responses (D. J. Siegel, 2007). Instead, mindfulness permits room for bottom-up processing, taking in experience as fully and directly as possible with receptivity (Austin, 2013; Parker, Nelson, Epel, & Siegel, 2015; Ryan & Rigby, 2015). These two states of being have also been described as the narrative self and the experiential self, differentiating between the ruminative self-related thought of top-down modes of processing and the avoidance of such self-referential elaboration in bottom-up modes of processing (Garland, Farb, Goldin, & Fredrickson, 2015; Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006).

Mindfulness is believed to relieve the automatic cognitive distortions and biases of the narrative self by promoting integration with the experiential self through structural changes in the brain circuitry associated with extinction and reconsolidation. Novel learning occurs as the

association between experience and its previous behavioral or emotional elicitation is weakened, and a new memory is created associating the experience with new responses (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). The extinction of self-objectification is believed to reduce suffering, as less threat and stress are perceived in events witnessed without defensive or evaluative tendencies (Weinstein, Brown, & Ryan, 2009).

Reactivation of memory of the experience can also lead to the process of reconsolidation, with positive reappraisal of cognitive responses and emotional reactions. The noting and labeling of sensory, cognitive and emotive states allows the practitioner to reflect upon these and consider whether what is being experienced is desirable or undesirable, warranted or unwarranted. This re-experiencing allows for new information to be integrated, and in effect, offers a window of opportunity to enhance, rewrite or disrupt the memory (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Interrupting the automaticity of cognitive responses and emotional reactions, an individual is able to choose from a wider range of thought and behavior patterns and respond more effectively (Bishop et al., 2004; K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011; Shapiro et al., 2006).

Prosociality. Major facets of prosocial behavior including empathy and perspective taking are believed to increase with mindfulness practice (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). It has been suggested that the quality of presence cultivated through meditation allows for greater interpersonal attunement (D. J. Siegel, 2012). The attentiveness developed through mindfulness is theorized to allow increased ability to take and express interest in others' thoughts and emotions (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b), and mindfulness practice has been frequently correlated to components of emotional intelligence (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003).

The meta-cognitive awareness generated through mindfulness practice allows individuals to better understand their own internal cognitive and emotional processes, leading to a greater capacity to understand others' cognitive and emotional processes (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002). The increased acceptance of one's own emotional states and enhanced ability to regulate one's emotions may contribute to greater tolerance for others' emotional states (Glomb et al., 2011).

Non-attachment and decentering. One of the outcomes of mindfulness practice is the realization of impermanence, or the non-attachment to oneself and one's thoughts and emotions. Decentering, which has also been described as "reperceiving" (Shapiro et al., 2006), refers to the space created between one's perception and response. The insight that self, thought and emotion are subjective and changeable as experienced through mindfulness practice is believed to improve well-being and functioning (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). When anger arises, for example, non-attachment and decentering allow for recognition of the emotion ("there is anger") as opposed to grasping on to the emotion ("I am angry"), providing space for the emotion to recede and exit naturally (Ryan & Rigby, 2015). This ability has also been referred to as reflexive awareness (Chiesa et al., 2011; Lutz et al., 2008). Disidentification from personal biases and response tendencies is thought to aid in the ability to examine assumptions and assess conclusions more objectively (K. W. Brown, 2015).

The benefits offered by mindfulness practices are being explored in a variety of fields, with each taking advantage of the benefits particularly applicable to the given context (D. J. Siegel, 2007). First adopted into clinical practices as an approach for reducing emotional distress, illness, chronic pain and maladaptive behavior (Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999; Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Linehan, 1993; Segal et al., 2002), the success of mindfulness based

interventions led to interest in the potential benefits for healthy subjects (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009; Khoury et al., 2013). Applications of mindfulness-based practices have spread to many facets of everyday life and have shown beneficial effects in a variety of populations including children, undergraduate and graduate students, professional adults, and the elderly (Black, 2015; Shapiro & Jazaieri, 2015).

Though the initial introduction of mindfulness practices to Western scientific contexts was focused on clinical states of mental and physical suffering, the original Buddhist intention was not only applicable to people with significant ills, but a path toward greater well-being for all practitioners. Contemporary investigations of applications for healthy populations might therefore be viewed as a shift back toward the Buddhist roots of mindfulness, as these are more in line with the goals from the practice's earliest traditions (K. W. Brown, 2015; Shapiro & Jazaieri, 2015).

Mindfulness in Organizations and Schools

Evidence of positive impact of mindfulness practice on segments of healthy adult populations continues to grow, as interventions are introduced to a variety of contexts including health care, romantic relationships, parenting, organizations and schools (Shapiro & Jazaieri, 2015). The established effects of mindfulness on mental and physical health and well-being have garnered attention in organizational and educational settings, primarily for the potential role of mindfulness on outcomes such as increased attention and task-performance, and reduced absenteeism (Dane, 2011; Glomb et al., 2011; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006)

It has been presumed that the non-attachment and decentering facilitated by mindfulness practices contributes to the observation of challenging situations with more positive reactions (Hulsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013). The reduction of habitual, top-down processing

cultivated through meditation has been said to enhance cognitive flexibility and problem solving (Moore & Malinowski, 2009), skills highly valued in schools and organizations. This reduction of automatic processing is also believed to promote behavior consistent with individual needs and values (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2001), behavior presumed to contribute to job satisfaction in the work setting (Glomb et al., 2011) and self-motivation in the school setting (Zenner, Hermleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2014). Further, the contribution of mindfulness to emotional regulation has been associated with increased vitality, energy, and emotional resourcefulness (Hulsheger et al., 2013), capacities necessary for success in both contexts.

Many have suggested the dynamic environments of workplaces and schools are exactly the types of settings which could practically benefit from mindfulness (Dane, 2011; Vogus, 2011; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006), and an expanding body of research demonstrates the interest in these applications. Given the connections made between benefits of mindfulness practice and desirable outcomes for workplace and school settings, it has been assumed that mindfulness could be beneficial when applied to these contexts. Nevertheless, most of the research to this point has been conceptual and empirical evidence is limited thus far (Dane & Brummel, 2013; Reb, Narayanan, et al., 2015).

Furthermore, within this limited body of evidence, a substantial portion of the research adopts the conceptualization of collective mindfulness, examining organizational rather than individual levels of mindfulness (Rerup & Levinthal, 2014; Vogus, 2011; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006) and working from Langer's (1989) cognitive definition of mindfulness. Though not directly applicable to this study, the research on collective mindfulness is still insightful and informative, and contributes to the growing knowledge of applications of mindfulness in

organizational contexts. Collective mindfulness literature is therefore included in the works discussed in the next section of this review.

Mindfulness in organizations. While key questions remain unanswered, investigations have begun to inform our understanding of mindfulness in organizations and in schools. Empirical evidence on the effects of mindfulness in organizations points to four main outcomes: well-being, performance, interpersonal relationships, and ethical decision making (Reb & Choi, 2014). The relation of mindfulness to stress reduction (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1990, 2003) and reduced depression and anxiety (Baer, 2003; K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003; Grossman et al., 2004) logically connects to the same effects being experienced in the workplace. Research provides evidence of mindfulness contributing to reductions in work-related stress and increases in employee well-being across a range of occupations (Roche et al., 2014; Shapiro & Jazaieri, 2015). Mindfulness has been linked to positive emotions toward work engagement (Malinowski & Lim, 2015) and greater authenticity in work functioning (Leroy et al., 2013), proposed mediators of well-being and resilience in the workplace.

The relation of mindfulness to improved attention and self-regulation (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003; Chiesa et al., 2011) also logically connects to the same effects being experienced in the workplace. One study spanning over a year and across multiple organizations determined that mindfulness was positively related to work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013). Similarly, cross-industry studies (Reb, Narayanan, et al., 2015) and studies in a wide range of settings such as nuclear power plants (Zhang, Ding, Li, & Wu, 2013), restaurant service (Dane & Brummel, 2013) and health care (Royal et al., 2014) provide further support that mindfulness is beneficial for work engagement and job performance. Confirming and extending upon these previous findings, Depenbrock (2014) determined a positive relationship between mindfulness and work

engagement was partially mediated by positive affect. Through mindfully attending to the present moment, individuals were reportedly more emotionally aware, and in addition to being better able to regulate their emotions, experienced enhanced positive emotions which, in turn, impacted their engagement at work.

Mindfulness has also been related to the ability to better regulate emotions in interactive situations, leading to more effective communication and negotiation in the workplace (Burrows, 2013; Reb & Narayanan, 2014). Even so, despite the understanding that organizational practice is inherently relational, very limited study has been conducted in the context of workplace relationships. Within this limited body of research, mindfulness training has been related to improved listening and less evaluative judgment of others (Beckman et al., 2012) and with more helpful organizational behavior and increased trust, support and cooperation (Hulsheger et al., 2013). Further, mindfulness has been connected to increased self-reported empathy (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998).

In addition to the interpersonal benefits of mindfulness in the workplace, the intrapersonal benefits are theorized to positively influence work engagement and performance. The suggestion that more mindful individuals behave more congruently with their values and interests (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003) translates to the work setting and the decision-making processes therein (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2010). The response flexibility promoted through mindfulness practice, in the outcomes of reduced automaticity and nonattachment, allows the individual to reduce habitual responses to workplace events and increase thoughtful consideration of reactions (Glomb et al., 2011). Greater alignment between goals and values has been directly linked to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bono & Judge, 2003).

The general benefits of mindfulness that are applicable to the workplace include stress-reduction (E. Hansen, 2016; Shapiro & Jazaieri, 2015), resilience and well-being (Dane, 2011; Glomb et al., 2011; Weinstein et al., 2009), task performance (Dane & Brummel, 2013; Reb, Narayanan, et al., 2015), and emotional intelligence (Tan, Lo, & Macrae, 2014). Context specific benefits of mindfulness in organizations have also been proposed in the literature. An exploratory study by Hunter and McCormick (2008) revealed a variety of outcomes of mindfulness practice in participants' work lives including increased external awareness and acceptance of external circumstances, increased adaptability, more realistic goal setting, reduced ego and decreased need for external recognition or validation, better work-life balance, and improved interpersonal relationships. Looking specifically at the service sector, examining jobs which require direct interactions with customers or clients, Hulsheger et al. (2012) suggested mindfulness can reduce the emotional exhaustion individuals are prone to experiencing in relation to the demands of their work.

Taking the collective view of mindfulness, researchers proposed benefits of mindfulness for developing readiness for change (Gartner, 2013; Gondo, Patterson, & Palacios, 2013) and contributing to reflection-in-action (Jordan, Messner, & Becker, 2009) in the workplace. Enhancing organizational mindfulness, it has been suggested, increases open communication, supportive working relationships, and participative decision making, allowing greater collective capacity for managing change (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012; Weick et al., 1999). By being more mindful, organizational members can identify instances in which prior assumptions or strategies are no longer relevant or useful, and can alter routine reactions or behaviors in order to be able to respond more thoughtfully in the moment (Gondo et al., 2013). Essentially, mindfulness is seen

as having potential for promoting learning in organizations (Aviles & Dent, 2015), and thus has garnered attention not only in organizations, but also in schools.

Mindfulness in schools. As with the workplace, the benefits of mindfulness practice provide compelling reasons for mindfulness instruction to be applied in educational settings, and multiple programs have been established in the past decade aiming to introduce mindfulness-based practices to schools. With the understanding that academic achievement, social and emotional competence, and physical and mental health are interrelated, schools are tasked with fostering development in all of these areas (Zenner et al., 2014) and are beginning to investigate the potential of mindfulness practice to support and improve school-based learning. The goals of mindfulness programs in schools include enhancing student engagement and academic performance, nurturing compassion and empathy, improving teacher resilience, and improving overall school culture (Garrison Institute Report, 2005).

Mindfulness can be introduced into schools indirectly, through teachers developing a personal practice; directly, through programs teaching students mindfulness exercises; or as a combination of these (Meiklejohn et al., 2012). Mindfulness interventions aimed at teachers are intended to address a variety of role-related pressures including stress, anxiety, depression, burn-out and retention. There is evidence that mindfulness training helps teachers cope more effectively with the demands and challenges of their work, such as frequent decision making, high levels of uncertainty, and managing multiple relationships (R. W. Roeser et al., 2013). Participation in mindfulness training results in significant improvements in teachers' self-compassion and abilities to remain calm (Frank, Reibel, Broderick, Cantrell, & Metz, 2015). A further benefit in introducing these practices is the nurturing of qualities in educators that they

are, in turn, meant to nurture in students including attention, executive function, empathy and compassion (J Davidson et al., 2012).

The majority of mindfulness-based curricula developed for school contexts within the last decade have been aimed at K-12 students directly, such as Inner Kids (www.susankaisergreenland.com), Mindful Schools (www.mindfulschools.org), MindUP (www.thehawnfoundation.org) and Wellness Works in Schools (www.wellnessworksinschools.com). These programs offer age-appropriate instruction in mindfulness practices such as focused attention on breath, awareness of thoughts, and movement experiences. Research has demonstrated enhanced self-regulation, stress resilience, and improved attention in children and adolescents following mindfulness training. Also, teachers and parents have reported that there were reductions in the number of behavior problems following mindfulness intervention (Meiklejohn et al., 2012).

According to Buddhist beliefs, teacher and student behaviors are interdependent, in that if the teacher changes behavior, the effects of these changes should be evident in the student (Dalai Lama, 2002). Roeser, Skinner, Beers, & Jennings (2012) speak of this in terms of “self-amplifying virtuous cycles” (p. 170). Unfortunately, these interventions for teachers and students are rarely integrated. The majority of programs designed for students are taught by the program’s mindfulness instructors, not by the classroom teachers. Most of the programs introduced into education, in fact, have focused exclusively on either educators or students. The promise of combining support for teachers with classroom-based learning for children is rarely realized through these approaches. It is the recommendation of several researchers analyzing the work in the field to date that a better model would be to both train teachers in mindfulness and in

teaching mindfulness to their students (Meiklejohn et al., 2012; R. W. Roeser et al., 2013; Whitehead, 2011; Zenner et al., 2014).

It can be surmised that the same can be said about leaders, in that in order to cultivate a mindful environment, the leader would need to embody the flexibility, openness, trust, risk taking, and awareness that she or he aims to develop in others. The quality of a leader's attention, ability to cope with stress, and ability to manage emotions has direct consequences for faculty, students and parents. The leader's ability to lead mindfully can have a profound effect on organizational mindfulness and members' willingness to take risks (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006). Yet, this is an area of research largely ignored. Mindfulness programs designed for organizations or schools seem to be portrayed as an intervention for individuals and an amenity provided by the organization, not as a resource guiding how members of the community – including leaders – work alongside each other.

Mindfulness in leadership. In providing practical methods for developing attention and awareness, mindfulness practices have the potential to enhance leaders' understanding of their own minds and of the changing situations before them (Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013). Leaders in organizations and in schools face challenges with no clear answers, complex and difficult problems that cannot be addressed with existing strategies (Heifetz & Linksky, 2002). Leaders are called upon to adapt and grow, and to inspire their organizations to adapt and grow, into new ways of thinking, relating, and acting (Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013). Leaders are also called upon to manage the range of negative emotions and cognitive impairments that come with resolving unfamiliar challenges. Instinctive stress reactions, if unmanaged, can impair not only a leader's ability to inspire and motivate others and make effective decisions, but also a leader's

health, well-being, and relationships inside and outside of the workplace (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005).

Mindfulness is beginning to be explored as a tool to support leaders in enacting the role of leadership more effectively. Studies demonstrating that mindfulness has the potential to significantly reduce stress (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009), to improve regulation of emotion (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b), and to increase situational awareness and objectivity (Garland et al., 2015) has led to the contention that mindfulness can be beneficial to leaders, prompting research in this newly emerging field. To date, research on the potential benefits of mindfulness for leaders has been primarily theoretical (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Sauer & Kohls, 2011), and aside from a small number of studies (Roche et al., 2014, Reb et al., 2014; Verdorfer, 2016), little empirical insight has been made available.

Mindfulness can be considered an inquiry into the self. Research in leadership development has proposed action inquiry as a means of self-development (Torbert & Associates, 2004), in that inquiring into one's present practice requires an individual to attend carefully to the limits of current meaning structures, likely prompting reflection on and adjustment of practice. Taken together, the application of mindfulness practices to an individual's enactment of leadership opens up an opportunity for inquiry into the self as leader. Concurrently, contemporary research methods offer a systematic way of inquiring into the self, and appear particularly well-suited for an investigation of mindful leadership. The next and final section of this literature review will examine the philosophical, theoretical and historical foundations of research aimed at the self, and outline the many connections between these forms of research and mindfulness.

Autoethnophenomenography

Sharing many similarities with mindfulness practice, the combined research methods of autoethnography and autophenomenography offer more than simply a way of knowing about the world, but also a way of being in the world. Autoethnography and autophenomenography require one to observe oneself, to interrogate one's thoughts, beliefs, and actions; to challenge one's own assumptions; and to inquire over and over again in order to penetrate the layers of one's own defenses, fears, and insecurities (Ellis & Adams, 2014). This practice, essentially an interrogation of one's identity, has been said to result in increased consciousness (Starr, 2010). Drawing upon Freire's (1970) concept of conscientization, the study of the self requires a way of being and of living "consciously, emotionally, and reflexively" (Ellis & Adams, 2014, p. 271).

This final section of the literature review will serve to contextualize the research in the frame of autoethnophenomenography as a living inquiry, coming from an understanding that "in the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we tell about our lives" (Bruner, 2004, p. 694). As a merging of the two methods of autoethnography and autophenomenography, autoethnophenomenography is an approach to research grounded in social constructivism, with a view of a person as perpetually in formation (McIlveen, 2008). Arising separately but in a shared resistance to traditional positivist forms of research that adhere to undebatable conclusions, autoethnography and autophenomenography emphasize the temporal and sociocultural influences of the understandings and insights gained through research, presenting findings as captured in one particular point in time and one specific context (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013). These methods reveal not only how the researcher forms, but is in turn formed by the research processes (L. Anderson, 2006a), asking, "How do the specific

circumstances in which we write affect what we write? How does what we write affect who we become?" (L. Richardson, 1997, p. 1).

Philosophical, Theoretical and Historical Foundations

Scholars have linked the development of autoethnography to various anthropological and sociological roots (L. Anderson, 2006a; Denzin, 2014; Doloriert & Sambrook, 2011; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Reed-Danahay, 1997). The method has been presented as a response to certain historical trends or "turns" (L. Anderson, 2006a, p. 373) including: growing skepticism and recognition of the limits of scientific knowledge; heightened concern about ethics of research; increased focus and appreciation of emotion within the social sciences; and heightened importance of identity and self-reflexivity (L. Anderson, 2006a; Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013).

Concerns raised by Milgram's obedience studies and the Tuskegee Syphilis experiments (see The Belmont Report, 1979) called into question the ethics of researching and representing others (Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013) and the potential exploitation of those being studied (Ellis & Adams, 2014). Researchers began to challenge the assumption that other cultures and social groups could be accurately studied and captured, recognizing that it is the author's voice crafting the experience rather than the voices of the participants (Allen-Collinson, 2016). Researchers grew increasingly aware of the reciprocal influence between themselves, their settings, and their informants (L. Anderson, 2006a). Paired with the social and political unrest of the 1960s and 1970s, this "crisis of representation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) prompted researchers to begin to account for the ways their own identities impact who and how they study, and what and how they write (Ellis & Adams, 2014).

Autoethnographic elements can be found in early qualitative sociological research, such as Nels Anderson's (1923) *The Hobo*, which drew heavily upon the author's personal experience

temporarily living among the homeless. Research carried out under the University of Chicago's Robert Park, who encouraged his students to pursue involvement in settings close to their own lives, or later under Everett Hughes, who guided students to study settings in which they worked or were personally involved, as also offered as early examples of the method (L. Anderson, 2006a). However, there continued to be a tendency to downplay or obscure the researcher, with the texts produced including no self-narrative or personal anecdotes.

Reports referred to as "confessional tales" (Geertz, 1973; van Manen, 1990), published separately from the research, served to reveal how the researcher conducted research, elaborating not only on the methods but exposing the researcher's personal biases, emotional reactions, struggles, and shifting understandings. These tales provided insight into the errors and misconceptions that were not so readily apparent in the "realist accounts" offered in the research text (L. Anderson, 2006a).

It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that more explicit self-observation and analysis began to surface within published research (Ellis & Adams, 2014). Over time, the researcher's self was exposed "explicitly, upfront, systematically . . . rather than as a subsidiary, confessional aside to the ethnographic account" (Allen-Collinson, 2016, p. 287). Researchers began to embrace the importance of documenting their own subjective experience (Douglas & Carless, 2006) and to situate their ethnographic data within their personal experience, allowing themselves to become "part of the story they are telling" (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delamont, 2003, p. 62).

Heider (1975) is identified as the first to use the term "auto-ethnography," describing a study in which cultural members give their own accounts about their culture. Goldschmidt (1977) is quoted as noting "all ethnography is self-ethnography" (p. 294), in that the

ethnographic method reveals personal investment. It is Hayano's (1979) published essay on auto-ethnography, however, which is most referred to as the moment of birth for the method, given the strong case he presents in the text for self-observation within ethnographic research. Hayano's exemplification of the method in *Poker Faces* (1982), stands as a model upon which this form of research continued to develop (L. Anderson, 2006b).

The 1990s saw the emergence of multiple texts emphasizing the importance of personal narratives in research including *Ethnographic Alternatives* (Ellis & Bochner, 2004); *Auto/Ethnography* (Reed-Danahay, 1997); *The Vulnerable Observer* (Behar, 1996) and *Writing Performance* (Pelias, 1999). Reed-Danahay (1997) shifted from Hayano's hyphenated "auto-ethnography" to "auto/ethnography," suggesting a closer relationship of mutual dependence (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2011). Ellis and Bochner (2000) introduced the term "autoethnography" that is widely used today, dropping any separation between the combined terms in order to imply connection of self to culture, blending of social sciences and humanities, and integration of the goals of research and expression (Ellis & Adams, 2014).

Gruppetta (2004) is the author attributed to first using the term "autophenomenography," making an argument that a researcher analyzing her own experiences of a phenomenon (as opposed to a cultural place) would more appropriately apply this term to the work rather than refer to it as an autoethnography. Phenomenology, devoted to the study of how things appear to consciousness (Giorgi, 1985) and based upon lived experience in the body, is a method derived from the philosophical work of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Over time various forms have emerged and have been utilized across a variety of disciplines, however, all maintain a common search for detailed, in-depth descriptions of human experience (Allen-Collinson, 2009).

Similar to autoethnography, phenomenology arose in a critique to positivism and in reaction to the perceived inadequacies of objective scientific approaches, seeking to acknowledge the subjectivity of human experience and knowledge. Based on the notion that individuals constitute themselves and the world, the phenomenologist seeks to set aside her assumptions of what is known about a phenomenon in order to approach it without preconception or prejudgment. By doing so, the researcher attempts to distil the phenomenon to its essential structures or essence. The primary role of consciousness is evident in the philosophy, often discussed in terms of intentionality in order to emphasize how consciousness is always intentionally directed at an object (Allen-Collinson, 2011). Phenomenological work does not attempt to generalize, recognizing that the textual interpretation offered is “always a project of someone: a real person, who in the context of particular individual, social, and historical life circumstances, sets out to make sense of a certain aspect of human existence” (van Manen, 1990, p. 40)

The Continua of Auto-ethno-graphy and Auto-phenomeno-graphy

All autoethnographic inquiry involves the use of personal experience to examine cultural experience (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013). The form an autoethnography takes, however, can range widely from more traditional social scientific analysis to more performance-based projects. The variety of ways of engaging in an inquiry of self in relation to culture have been described as a continuum from evocative to analytical (L. Anderson, 2006a). While every autoethnography engages in some way with subjectivity and culture, different researchers place different emphases on the elements of self (auto), culture (ethno) and the research and writing process (graphy) (Allen-Collinson, 2016; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ngunjiri et al., 2010; Reed-Danahay, 1997).

Moving along the continuum from evocative to analytic, one encounters “blurred boundaries as opposed to clear distinctions” (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013 p. 64) in the ways that self and culture are conceptualized and written. Within the “blurred genre” (Holman-Jones, 2005, p. 765) of autoethnography, works can be “simultaneously personal and scholarly, evocative and analytical, descriptive and theoretical” (Denshire, 2013, p. 4). The method is “critical, reflexive and performative . . . wholly none of these but fragments of each” (Spry, 2011, p. 498).

Whichever form they take, autoethnographic inquiries are united by the shared intentions behind the research. Autoethnographers are driven by intentions to describe cultural experience, to contribute to scholarly dialogue, to make personal and vulnerable experience available and to invite others to engage with and respond to the work (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013). Researchers employing this methodology are “guided less by specific techniques of data collection than by a set of ethical, aesthetic and relational sensitivities” (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013, p. 65). Common characteristics among the various forms of autoethnography are: visibility of self, strong reflexivity, engagement, vulnerability, and open-endedness (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013, p. 72).

Emphasis on the visibility of self within the method has deepened over time, from Hayano’s (1979) first applications of “insider” ethnography (p. 99). Whereas once the researcher was a member of the culture under study, but a less present self in the writing (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013), the method is understood today as primarily a “self-narrative” (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p. 9). The authors of autoethnographies are purposefully and self-consciously engaged in the construction of meaning within the social and cultural worlds they are investigating (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013). The method recognizes and utilizes

“subjective experience as an intrinsic part of research” (Davies, 1999, p. 5), opposing the traditional positivist view that research necessitates detachment and objectivity (Adler & Adler, 1987) and instead demanding “personal engagement as a medium through which deeper understanding is achieved and communicated” (L. Anderson & Glass-Coffin, p. 74)

In common with autoethnography, within autophenomenography there is a spectrum or continuum of approaches, from more realist (Sparkes, 2002) to more evocative forms (Todres, 2007). In fact, it has been said there are as many styles of phenomenology as there are phenomenologists (Spiegelberg, 1982). This is believed to have resulted from the blurred boundaries of phenomenology as both a philosophy and a research method (Dowling, 2007). The widespread disagreement about what phenomenology is and how it is practiced has also been tied to the ongoing evolution of the philosophical movement, which has resulted in three major versions: transcendental, hermeneutic and existential (Ehrich, 1999).

van Manen (1990), Ehrich (1999), and Dowling (2007) have each provided an examination of the development of phenomenology from its origins in philosophy to its use in research, from which the following brief overview is derived. Transcendental phenomenology, usually connected to Husserl (1931/2012), was aimed toward the achievement of pure consciousness which would yield essential understandings. Husserl’s belief that unchangeable and universal aspects of phenomena could be determined was criticized by many, including his own student Heidegger (1962/2008). Heidegger’s belief that every form of consciousness or awareness is interpretive developed into what is now commonly referred to as hermeneutic phenomenology. This form emphasized being over consciousness and was later elaborated by van Manen (1990) in an effort to identify methods for understanding the meaning of human phenomena.

Later, under the influence of the philosophy of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, existential phenomenology emerged in the twentieth century, also rejecting Husserl's notion that the self and consciousness could be separated. The work of Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014) takes this form, with experience as the central concern in studying human life. Giorgi (1985) built upon the theoretical insights of the existential phenomenological philosophy and translated this into a scientific methodology. The primary difference between the method developed by van Manen (1990) and that by Giorgi (1985) is in the absence of a step-by-step process. van Manen (1990) maintained that phenomenological research is neither structured nor procedural, instead offering various ways of investigating lived experience and suggestions for conducting analysis and presenting narrative anecdotes. Giorgi (1985), on the other hand, provided clearly identified steps for data collection and analysis.

Criticisms and Defenses of Autographic Methods

Due to the subjective foundations, autographic research methods have not been positively embraced by some in academia, rather, these methods have been viewed with skepticism, and often accused of being self-absorbed (L. Anderson, 2006a; Delamont, 2007) and egotistical (Coffey, 1999; Roth, 2009) due to the “navel-gazing” (Madison, 2006) focus on the self. Dismissed as being insufficiently rigorous, theoretical and analytical, autographic methods are considered by some to be unable to fulfill their scholarly obligation due to use of “biased data” (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 283)

Delamont (2007) expressed a near hatred for autoethnography, describing the method as “essentially lazy – literally lazy and also intellectually lazy” (p. 2). She offered grounds for her objections to the method, stating that it cannot fight familiarity, cannot be published ethically, is experiential and not analytic, and is an abuse of the privilege of being a qualitative researcher.

Delamont and others (Atkinson, 2006; Hammersley, 2000; Sparkes, 2002) criticized autoethnography's focus on the self and question introspection as a valid and appropriate method of data collection.

Proponents of autoethnography admit the method disrupts common norms of research practice (Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013), however, suggest that a focus on the self is the only way some experiences can become known and understood (Denzin, 1997; Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2007; Anderson, 2006). Peseta (2012) stated, "Without these intimate and detailed evocations of life and professional practice, our knowledge of these worlds would be severely diminished" (cited in Denshire, 2013, p. 5). From the earliest discussions of autoethnography, the obvious practical advantages of being fully immersed in the research context have been recognized as a means of deepening understanding (Hayano, 1979).

The personal involvement demanded by autoethnography provides a direct link from the micro level of personal, lived experience with the macro level of culture (Allen-Collinson, 2016), filling experiential gaps in traditional research by making the researcher's own emotion, voice and personal perspectives accessible (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013; Ellis & Adams, 2014). Vryan (2006) noted, "If anyone else sought to study my life, no amount of interviewing or observation of me by a researcher would have been capable of producing the depth, richness and fullness of data I was able to assemble via fully-immersive self-observation, self-interviewing and self-analysis" (p. 407). Tillmann-Healy (1996) argued this point from a more personal position, suggesting, "I can show you a view no physician or therapist can, because, in the midst of an otherwise 'normal' life, I experience how a bulimic *lives and feels*" (p. 80).

Similarly, defenders of autophenomenology, and phenomenographic research in general, argue that the social world as it is constructed and experienced cannot be understood without

taking a subjective view (L. Richardson, 1999). Scholars utilizing the method have deemed traditional research criteria of validity, reliability, and generalizability as inappropriate, and suggest alternative evaluation criteria more relevant and applicable to forms of interpretive research (Sparkes, 2002).

Contradicting Delamont (2007) and other critics, defenders of autographic methods claim these are “by no means a choice for the lazy,” (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2011, p. 87) with the process of data collection and analysis requiring considerable time, effort, resilience and conviction (Denshire, 2013). In gaining access to data unobtainable by other methods, the results of studying one’s own life and experience, though a unique empirical context, is believed to have relevance beyond the researcher’s own personal experience (Vryan, 2006). The very personal nature of autographic methods of inquiry is seen by proponents as a distinct advantage, in the ability to make meaning and knowledge accessible and available to a wider audience by creating texts that invite readers in rather than keep them at a distance (Doloriert, 2016).

Conclusion

Having reviewed the bodies of literature related to contemporary understandings of leadership, the practices and benefits of mindfulness, and introspective methods of research, the ensō symbol may now carry greater meaning for the reader and a clearer connection can be made to the open circle brushstroke which opened the pages of this inquiry. The infinite continuation of one’s identity and learning can be seen in various threads running through each of the three main topics of the literature review.

This research answers the demand expressed by the leadership development literature for insight into the various ways individuals and organizations can enhance leadership. It recognizes the social-constructivist understanding of adult learning and development and that

supporting leadership development requires efforts to develop the cognitive structures and psychological processes within the individual, toward achievement of an understanding of self as a dynamic, transforming object of possibility.

This research connects the benefits that have been attributed to mindfulness practice with the demands of leadership, and suggests that through the application of techniques developing self-awareness, self-regulation and self-transcendence, a leader's identify and learning can continue down the infinite path of development. Coming from an understanding that a researcher both forms and is in turn formed by the research processes, this living inquiry is understood to be both the impetus for and the record of this researcher-practitioner's development as a leader. I respectfully submit the example of my own experience as illustration of the potential for mindfulness to prove useful for leader and leadership development in schools.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine a researcher-leader's attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice, investigating how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership. In seeking to understand the lived experience of mindful leadership, the study addressed three research questions:

1. What are my perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of my professional role as educational leader?
2. In what manner is my cultivation of mindfulness perceived to be present in my enactment of leadership?
3. How are my professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice?

This chapter describes the research design and includes explanations of the rationale for an autoethnophenomenographic approach as well as the methods of data collection and analysis. Ethical considerations, issues of trustworthiness and limitations of the study are also discussed.

Rationale

The intersection of mindfulness practices and empirical research represents “a convergence of two different ways of knowing” (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011, p. 3). True understanding and insight require interplay between first person experience and second or third person perspective, combining the subjective and objective (Grossman & Van Dam, 2011; Varela & Shear, 1999). The method chosen for the proposed study of mindfulness in educational leadership is a combination of autoethnography and autophenomenography, herein referred to as

autoethnophenomenography. Selected for its alignment with the subject matter, with the educational context and with my own positionality, the combination of the autoethnographic approach with the insights of phenomenology allowed me to examine and analyze my subjective experience of mindfulness and leadership as both the *doing* of the activities and the *being* in the body. This provided the opportunity to develop not only a cognitive understanding of the training and performance of these activities, but also the corporal, embedded-in-everyday-practice, embodied understanding of how it actually feels to be a mindful leader (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014).

In this application of a human science research approach to an investigation of the meanings and enactment of school leadership, the questions raised, the data gathered, and the interpretations constructed were inevitably derived from a pedagogic orientation. Pedagogy, understood as the method and practice of teaching, “requires constant practical acting in concrete situations and relations” (van Manen, 1990, p. 2). The act of researching, from this orientation, becomes an effort to be more fully part of experience in order to gain a deeper understanding of the nature and meaning of this experience.

Led into research by a desire to know more about leadership, or more specifically, by an intention to improve my own practice of leadership, I was naturally drawn to qualitative research design, the philosophical foundations of which are deeply rooted in my professional training and continually reinforced by the educational communities in which I work. Informed by social constructivism, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism, my interest is in understanding experience as it is lived and interpreted, attempting to make sense of the meaning that is attributed to the interactions and situations in a particular context.

In Chapter One, I acknowledged the broad assumptions that brought me to qualitative inquiry and the social constructivist interpretive lens I will bring to this research. Aligned with this positionality, autoethnophenomenography can be defined similarly to autoethnography, as a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts (Reed-Danahay, 1997; Spry, 2001). In examining lived experience, this method recognizes the subjectivity of the construction of meaning and the contextual nature of reality (McIlveen, 2008). The subjective self of the researcher is recognized as a salient part of the research process, with the understanding that “what happens within the observer must be made known if the nature of what has been observed is to be understood” (Spry, 2001, p. 711).

Part autobiography, and therefore grounded in narrative research, *autoethnophenomenography* begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories, revealing the identity of the researcher-leader and how the self is understood (Creswell, 2013). This approach allows for the examination of multiple layers of consciousness, exposing the vulnerable self, the coherent self and the critical self (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Part ethnography, and therefore grounded in cultural research, *autoethnophenomenography* also involves immersion in day-to-day life in a single context, revealing the meaning of the behavior, the language and the interactions of the researcher-leader and the ideas and beliefs expressed in these outward actions and appearances (Creswell, 2013). The examination of self is context-conscious (Ngunjiri et al., 2010), meaning the self is connected to a variety of others, including those with similar perspectives and experiences to the self, those with different perspectives and experiences to the self, and those with perspectives and experiences which challenge and may be irreconcilable to the self (Chang, 2008).

Part phenomenography, and therefore grounded in experiential research, autoethnophenomenography aims at reaching an understanding of the world as it is immediately experienced through a description of internal meanings as they are lived in everyday existence (van Manen, 1990). A primary focus is placed upon the researcher's lived experience of a phenomenon or phenomena (Gruppetta, 2004), examining the self engaging in a specific way to things as they appear to the conscious mind (Allen-Collinson, 2011, 2016).

The etymology of autoethnophenomenography, detailed in the introduction, points to writing as the primary research tool. As van Manen (1990) describes, "Writing separates the knower from the known . . . it is the dialectic of embodiment and disembodiment" (p. 127). Writing "places consciousness in the position of the possibility of confronting itself, in a self-reflective relation. To write is to exercise self-consciousness" (p. 129). While all research is essentially a linguistic project, in that the communication of the process and findings makes writing an inevitable aspect of the work, in this particular approach research does not merely involve writing, it is the work of writing. Writing is the mode of inquiry and the very essence of the research (Adams, Jones, & Eillis, 2015; van Manen, 1990).

In its methodology, autoethnography has been presented as a continuum, with researchers varying in emphasis on the auto-ethno-graphy elements of self, other and research process (Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Reed-Danahay, 1997). One end of the continuum tends toward anthropological and social scientific inquiry, whereas the other end of the continuum tends more toward descriptive or performative storytelling (Chang, 2008). Reed-Danahay (2009) discriminates between these opposite forms with descriptors "autobiographical ethnography" and "ethnographic autobiography" (p. 31), the former referring to ethnography which incorporates personal experience and the latter referring to personal experience of the

ethnographer. If considered as residing on the autoethnographic continuum, autophenomenography (Grupetta, 2004; Allen-Collinson, 2009; 2011) “might be construed as extending the *auto* focus further inward to the phenomenal layers of the researcher’s lived experience” (Allen-Collinson, 2016, p. 291).

Overview of Study Design

Despite the personal, intimate nature of this inquiry, the method required the same rigorous planning and implementation demanded by all types of research.

Autoethnophenomenography offered a unique methodology that satisfies a central need of this inquiry, which is to enable continual access to the researcher as subject. This approach also offers flexibility to draw upon a variety of qualitative research methods. This alignment and flexibility made possible my deep exploration of my own experiences as an educational leader, and how these experiences inform and transform my identity. Concurrently, an examination of myself, my values and beliefs revealed what drives particular aspects of my leadership practice, and how my developing identity informs and transforms my enactment of leadership.

The approach to research for this study included documenting in detail my engagement in mindfulness practice, keeping notes in terms of timings and forms of practices undertaken, and recording in detail the specific, concrete, subjective and corporeal experiences. The study also involved documenting the felt states of leadership, processes requiring me to dive deeply into the emotion of this particular aspect of identity, and approach leadership as a phenomenon or lived experience, as well as a social-cultural category and construct. Self-perceptions of my own experiences cultivating attentional, cognitive and affective qualities through mindfulness practice were examined. These were compared to reports from informants on the enactment of leadership, providing an outside view to compare with my internal experience. A more in-depth

discussion of each of these undertakings is provided, following a brief summary of the research context.

Leadership Context and Stance

This research was conducted in my current school context, ensuring complete member researcher status. In order to protect the anonymity of the others inevitably and unavoidably implicated in this self-narrative approach to the research, the description of the setting offered below is purposefully minimal. However, an extensive examination of my role in the setting is offered.

I hold the position of Educational Director in a private progressive early childhood setting situated in an affluent neighborhood of a major city in the Northeastern United States. The school serves children from ages 18 months to five years old, with approximately 150 children enrolled. The faculty consists of 18 full-time classroom teachers, five part-time curriculum extensions teachers, and five full-time administrators.

The primary function of the role of Educational Director is to support teachers in the design of engaging learning experiences for children. The responsibilities of the role include maintaining a high level of visibility in classrooms, observing the development of children and teachers, providing feedback to teachers, evaluating and formally documenting teacher performance, leading weekly classroom team meetings and monthly staff meetings, and developing positive relationships with teachers, children, and families. Bringing my own positionality to the role, the way in which I approach these responsibilities is with beliefs consistent with the lenses of social-constructivism and cosmopolitanism as discussed in the Introduction.

I believe in life-long learning. As human beings, whether young or old, we are always looking to develop ourselves, to learn, and to grow. I approach the role of Educational Director much the same as I approached the role of teacher in the classroom, with the understanding that each person is a unique individual, with his or her own strengths, own perspective, own ways of being and thinking. Therefore, an individual approach is required, whether meeting the needs of teachers, children, or parents.

I believe my role, as a leader and as a teacher, is to guide and support. I have great trust and respect in the capabilities of every member of our faculty, and believe each individual teacher is the driver of his or her own path of professional growth. As a mentor, I may be able to offer some inspiration or direction based on my extensive teaching experience and years of professional learning, yet I always view the teacher as the expert in any given classroom situation, as he or she is the person with the most data. I do not see my role as dictating definitively what should happen, but as supporting the reflective and constructive processes through questioning ideas and practices in an inductive way. My role is to help teachers find their own answers.

I believe my role is to support the well-being of everyone in the school community. This requires attention to space, time, and relationships, and focused observation of group dynamics. I collaborate with teachers in their daily work with children and their families by observing, documenting, analyzing and interpreting the needs of each child and family and using this knowledge to plan responsive learning experiences. In meetings with teaching teams, my primary focus is centered on genuine conversation about the work that the children are doing, and the clues and indications for next steps in the children's and teachers' shared research project. In these collaborations, the flow of information must come from the teachers, where the

daily life in the classroom is reconstructed, reviewed, re-examined and reflected upon. Being effective in my role is entirely dependent upon the effectiveness of teacher observation, documentation and communication of all that is happening in the classroom.

I believe my role is to help teachers improve their skills of observing and listening to children, and their skills of research. I am responsible for supporting teachers as they guide and learn alongside the children, and engage in efforts to collect children's comments and actions and understand their theories. I, too, am a researcher, and spend time in classrooms engaged in the observing, documenting and interpreting of children's activities. I act as a consultant, offering suggestions for how to introduce concepts or ideas to the children, how to stimulate their curiosity, how to guide them on possible paths of learning.

I believe my role is to support collegiality and open discussion, and to give everyone the opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions. Relationships between teachers must be nurtured, and one of my responsibilities is to help colleagues learn how to effectively communicate with and support one another. Relationships with families must also be nurtured, and one of my responsibilities is to help teachers be more effective in their communication with parents. I am always available to talk through any professional conflicts that arise, and to coach members of our faculty on how to best approach challenging relationships.

I believe in the power of collaboration and that we have the opportunity to better ourselves by learning from one another. In my role, I am responsible for overseeing that structures and scheduling allow for collaboration to occur. By inviting peers into our classrooms and by making the teaching and learning in the classrooms visible in blog posts and narratives, we open up our thinking to fellow educators, allowing us to tap into the collective wisdom of our

faculty. I believe my role involves supporting a culture of professional sharing that allows more effective practices to be learned and developed.

From this particular position of leadership and the preceding outline of my leadership stance, mindfulness has the potential to impact not only my personal well-being, but my way of interacting with and supporting teachers in their professional growth. While developing my own identity as a leader, I am also supporting others in developing their identities as educators. My efforts to cultivate self-awareness, self-regulation and self-transcendence will not take place in isolation, but will be very much a part of my everyday interactions and enactment of this role of Educational Director.

Mindfulness Practices

Given the range of interventions designed to cultivate mindfulness, it is important to delineate those which have been selected for this particular inquiry. The desired outcomes of this research are two-fold: to contribute to the growing bodies of literature on organizational, school, and leader mindfulness, and to develop skills applicable to my own educational leadership practice. Meditation has been a part of my life since my early adulthood, when I first began a regular yoga practice, and in the decades since, I have participated in several yoga and mindfulness retreats, but have not studied nor practiced mindfulness meditation with any structured regularity. In preparation for this inquiry, it seemed prudent to determine specific techniques to implement in my daily life on a more systematic basis.

With the majority of research and the majority of interventions based on the original secular mindfulness-based program of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR; Kabat-Zinn, 1990), this was the program selected for focused mindfulness training. This program was selected for its relevance to other research, in an effort to increase the connections that might be

made between this study and previous and future studies. In November 2016, I completed an online version of the 8-week MBSR training available through Sounds True. This course follows the same, well-respected method taught at the University of Massachusetts Medical School Center for Mindfulness, Medicine, Health Care, and Society, offering the curriculum and methodology developed by Kabat-Zinn (1990). The techniques taught through this program have since been applied systematically in my daily life as a means of cultivating mindfulness.

Further, recognizing that school is a particular context, and as such, application of mindfulness to this context may differ from applications in other organizations, it appeared important to also examine mindfulness practices designed for the school setting. The Mindful Schools organization provides a variety of online training courses for educators. Primarily based on Kabat-Zinn's research and MBSR methods, the practices and techniques taught in these courses are complementary to the Sounds True MBSR training, while offering insight into the school-based application of these practices and techniques.

Mindfulness Fundamentals is a course I completed in June 2016, reviewing the basics of mindfulness meditation and the development of a daily practice. Mindful Educator Essentials, also completed in June 2016, built upon this personal mindfulness practice and introduced techniques and curriculum for integrating mindfulness into educators' work with children. In December 2016, completion of Mindful Communication allowed me to extend on the educator essentials, developing techniques to reduce stress associated with interpersonal conflict and skills that foster trust and collaboration with school community members. Further coursework in Difficult Emotions, also completed in December 2016, provided ways to reframe and interpret challenging emotional states that are frequently experienced by educators, including anxiety, anger, and self-criticism.

Supplementing the aforementioned online training, I attended the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute held in Manhattan on November 1 and 2, 2016. This program consisted of two days of in-person teaching of attention and mindfulness training based on the program developed at Google. This program is specifically targeted at building emotional intelligence skills needed for leadership, and therefore particularly relevant to this study. The interactive and experiential delivery of the program offered a different experience to the online training.

Intentional, formal practice of mindfulness has been a consistent part of my everyday life since September 2016. Each morning, I selected an auditory track of a guided meditation to begin the day (transcripts provided in Appendix B). These guided meditations prompted me through practices such as meditation on breath, kindness meditation, or body scan techniques. In addition to this regular morning practice, the Chill application on my iPhone provided multiple mindfulness reminders, offered at random times throughout the day. An auditory chime paired with a written alert (such as “Come back to your body”) provided reminders to stay present with mindfulness in each moment (examples provided in Appendix C).

Methods of Data Collection

The procedures applied toward data collection and analysis have been derived from the suggestions conceived and offered in several methodological texts, including Van Manen’s (1990) *Researching Lived Experience*, Chang’s (2008) *Autoethnography as Method*, and Emerson, Fretz and Shaw’s (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Numerous data collection methods were applied in an effort to layer data from different perspectives, and nearly all invoked engagement in some form of writing. In the efforts to record my own behaviors, thoughts and emotions as they naturally occurred, I attempted to create a distance between the self and experience, and in doing so, provide the space for reflective awareness. The doing of

mindfulness and leadership and the writing about mindfulness and leadership should not be seen as separate and distinct activities, but rather as related, interdependent and mutually essential activities (van Manen, 1990, p.19)

Personal Memory

Chang (2008) notes, “Every piece of writing reflects the disposition of its author” (p. 10), and van Manen (1990) also points to personal experience as the starting point for research. The first step in approaching data collection, therefore, was to explicitly reveal my personal and professional interests and values and how these relate to this inquiry. Chronicling the past through creation of an autobiographical timeline (Chang, 2008, p. 72), I endeavored to illuminate certain aspects of my personal evolution of mindfulness practice and my professional evolution as an educational leader, and how these have now coincided in this planned research (Personal Memory journal entry excerpt, see Appendix D).

Self-Observation

Data collection included the recording of my own behaviors, thoughts and emotions as they naturally occurred in relation to my personal practice of mindfulness and my role as an educational leader. In this self-observation, I endeavored to bring to the surface the “cognitive processes, emotions, motives, concealed actions, omitted actions . . . and habituated or unconscious matter” (Rodriguez & Ryave, 2002, pp. 3-4) that are part of my daily life. Self-observation collection included both interval and occurrence recording techniques, offering information on the patterns and frequency of cognition, emotion, behavior, and interaction.

Several distinct approaches were taken to self-observation fieldnotes, reflecting the opposing pressures of involvement and distance that exist when one is both participant and researcher. At times, I consciously chose to participate fully and to suspend immediate concerns

with writing, only at some later point turning to the task of recalling and examining experiences in order to write them down, relying on what ethnographers refer to as “headnotes” (Emerson et al., p. 23). On other occasions, I could participate in ongoing events in ways that directly and immediately involved inscription. My participation in my role as educational leader in some instances could be explicitly oriented toward writing down a detailed record, either making use of brief jottings or more extensive notes.

In all cases, there was always a conscious choice between taking notes in the presence of others or making more private jottings just after an incident or conversation, out of sight of others. It must be noted here that there is tremendous benefit in being in a Reggio Emilia inspired setting, where writing is a required and accepted activity, for purposes of observation and documentation of children’s learning processes. Therefore, I was often able to take jottings without attracting any special notice. However, the data collection efforts still required strategies for how, where, and when to jot notes according to the particular circumstances of an event and/or different relationships with people involved (van Manen, 1990, p. 40).

As with all self-study forms of research, data collection methods required balancing and combining research commitments with personal attachments in a variety of ways. My choices reflected a prioritizing of relationships and preserving the quality of those relationships, and I consistently sought to keep writing/research from intruding into and affecting my connections with others. Whichever approach was taken, efforts were made toward noting key components of observed events and concrete sensory details, avoiding generalizations or opinions. Notes focused on my personal sense of what was significant and noteworthy within the flow of ongoing activity.

Ecological Momentary Assessment. One method of self-observation applied in the moment, while also participating in the ongoing events of the day was Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA; Schwartz & Stone, 1998; Shiffman & Stone, 1998; Smyth & Stone, 2003) EMA offers insight into variations associated with time of day, and naturally occurring fluctuations in activity, psychological state, and behavior. The application of EMA to this research study involved signaling myself multiple times across a day to report on immediate affective, cognitive and behavioral experiences. Making use of the mindfulness reminders provided by the Chill app on my iPhone, I would respond to each of the alerts by taking a few moments to record my responses to the EMA prompts (see Appendix E).

The EMA approach was applied on a random day of each week across the six-month duration of the inquiry. This data collection technique provided a rich, dynamic picture of my daily experiences enacting educational leadership with mindfulness. The series of questions serving as prompts for these momentary reports, sought to highlight experiences that reflect the interplay of mindfulness and the enactment of leadership. EMA addresses the issue of retrospective self-report measures being prone to distortions, errors and biases due to cognitive and memory limitations by minimizing reliance on recall. Through the collection of repeated momentary assessments at scheduled intervals, a representative sample was produced (EMA Journal Entry Excerpt, see Appendix F).

Day Reconstruction Method. The Day Reconstruction Method (DRM; Kahneman & Krueger, 2006) involves summarizing episodes that occurred over the course of a day by completing a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The questions encourage description of key features of episodes identified throughout the day, including descriptions of cognitive, affective and behavioral states and a rating scale to indicate the intensity of the states noted

(DRM Prompts, see Appendix G). This data collection approach was revised for application to this research inquiry by incorporating Vago & Silbersweig's (2012) S-ART framework for mindfulness to create the rating scale (see discussion in the Review of Literature). The revised DRM was used to create a structured diary entry once a week for the six-month duration of the study (DRM Journal Entry Excerpt, see Appendix H).

Reflective Journal. On the days when EMA or DRM were not applied, informal fieldnotes were added to a reflective journal. Separate from the more descriptive data collected through the aforementioned systematic self-observation techniques, the reflective journal included notes on the self, the practice of mindfulness, the practice of educational leadership, and the research process, as they occurred. Notes were written as soon as possible after the school day ended, usually as immediately after leaving as possible, writing while in transit between school and home. The immediacy of the notes was intended to produce fresher, more detailed recollections (van Manen, 1990). Strategies for the reflective journal writing included reimagining and replaying in mind the scenes that marked the day, either retracing my activities in chronological order or simply recalling the more standout events related to a specific interest (Reflective Journal Entry Excerpt, see Appendix I).

Documents

Documents I had authored, such as emails, blog posts and written feedback to colleagues were collected for potential evidence of mindful leadership practices. All names and identifiers were removed from any such documents to protect the anonymity of colleagues addressed or mentioned in the documents. For those documents such as emails that were part of an ongoing correspondence, only my portion of the correspondence was collected as data. Other existing, but time-neutral documents I had authored, such as the school's mission statement, the faculty

handbook, and my own statement of leadership philosophy were also collected as data. These written documents were used for historical compassion and were used as the basis for meta-writing, so that I might identify my own thought processes and conscious applications of mindful communication techniques within these self-authored exchanges (Email example, see Appendix J).

External Perspectives

Introspectively generated data was paired with efforts to gather external perspectives to provide data to confirm or reject my own internal view. L. Anderson (2006a) notes, “No ethnographic work – not even autoethnography – is warrant to generalize from an ‘N of one’” (p. 386). Dialogue with others guards against the potential for self-absorption that such sustained attention to one’s own experience carries.

To provide anonymity and offer space for honest responses, I enlisted the services of an outside organization to conduct a formalized 360° leadership assessment. Using The Leadership Circle Profile™ (R. J. Anderson, 2006), insight into my professional relationships with colleagues and my enactment of leadership was provided. This external feedback on my leadership performance, habits and perceptions served as a comparison to the self-reported data.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis was intertwined and interactive with the data collection process, taking place concurrently. Data analysis within the autoethnographic method has been described as a cycle of “enlightenment, reflection and action” and as a “critical process of self-analysis and understanding” (Starr, 2010). While writing fieldnotes in any form (EMA, DRM or Reflection), I would inevitably begin to reflect on and interpret my experiences and observations. As I recalled and attempted to record my experience, I would also engage in the process of making

sense of this experience and begin to identify links with or contrasts to previously recorded events.

In-Process Analysis

Capturing these reflections and insights in order to make them available for further thought and analysis, I would make use of asides and commentaries to note the questions, ideas, and reactions that surfaced in thought while in the process of writing fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 2011, pp. 80-81). Asides were crafted as short comments, written in parenthesis within the normal flow of writing. Commentaries were more reflective in nature, written separately under the full account of the event, and after the entry had been completed and re-read.

Over time as data began to accumulate, I also began making use of in-process memos, producing more extended and sustained analytic writing. These in-process memos required a cognitive shift of attention in regard to audience. Whereas the asides and commentaries were written primarily for myself as future reader, in anticipation of later detailed rereading for the purposes of coding and analyzing, the in-process memos were the beginnings of writing for an outside audience, framed and organized for their anticipated inclusion in the publication of the research. Chang (2008) describes this process in detail:

data analysis and interpretation . . . this process transforms bits of autobiographical data into a culturally meaningful and sensible text. Analysis and interpretation enable researchers to shift their focus from merely “scavenging” or “quilting” information bits to actively “transforming” them into a text with culturally meaningful explanations (p. 126).

These analytic memos served as reflection points when patterns, categories, concepts or assertions emerged in my thinking, provided an opportunity to note tentative answers to the study’s questions, and also allowed me to note ideas about the wider implications of the research.

Organization

Organization of data occurred as the data was collected, providing the opportunity to recognize where more data was needed or where sufficient data had been accumulated (Chang, 2008). Collected data was labeled by collection strategies, creating sets, and classified by topics, creating categories. Labels identified collection technique, date and content, for example, *Reflective Journal_01-20-17_Distractions*.

Retrospective Analysis

As the six-month data collection period drew to a close at the end of May, I drew back from the process of collecting fieldnotes and ceased to actively engage in the data collection process. This provided the opportunity to turn to the cumulated written record that had been produced with a more intense, concentrated and comprehensive effort to analyze the data (van Manen, 1990).

Reading and rereading. All fieldnotes and collected documents were read in their entirety to get immersed in the details and to take in the record of experience as it evolved over time (“wholistic approach” van Manen, 1990). This re-reading provided an opportunity to perceive changes over time, to gain fresh insights, and to note ideas or key concepts related to the research questions. Based on subsequent growth, reflection and learning, some of the initial interpretations and commentaries now re-encountered could seem naïve, and the contrast between initial and later understanding more apparent (Emerson et al, 2011).

Describing, classifying, interpreting. After reading the fieldnotes and documents in full as a complete corpus, a subsequent reading was used to engage in open coding (“detailed approach” van Manen, 1990). Line-by-line categorization of notes was created using any and all ideas, themes or issues suggested by the contents, no matter how varied. Words and phrases

were recorded on the word document in the comment field as a way to name and distinguish the conceptual significance of particular observations. Code memos were added to record ideas and insights as they occurred and were generated by the process of identifying and exploring general patterns and themes across events (Emerson et al, 2011).

Following open coding, a narrowing and focusing process was employed in order to select a small number of core themes or topics. Attention was drawn to topics with a high frequency of occurrences, giving priority to what appeared to reflect recurrent patterns. Fieldnotes were sorted on the basis of selected themes, requiring the physical movement of data excerpts into new documents.

Using the sorted fieldnote documents, focused coding processes were applied to engage in analysis based on the identified themes or topics. Line-by-line analysis of the selected and sorted notes allowed for the connection of data and the delineation of subthemes, distinguishing commonalities and variations within the broader topic. Integrative memos were added to elaborate ideas and begin to link selected pieces of data together, exploring the relationships between coded notes. These memos functioned as a first attempt toward formulating a cohesive idea and developing theoretical connections between the excerpts and the conceptual themes (Emerson et al, 2011).

Finally, a further re-reading of the documents in full as a complete corpus was used to engage in a second round of focused coding, this time specifically searching for the meaning units that could be examined alongside the Leadership Circle Profile™ data. Using terms from the leadership evaluation, for example, caring, collaboration, selflessness, integrity, focus; documents were searched line by line for words and phrases explicitly or implicitly connected to these ideas.

Leadership Circle Profile

Stepping further outside the self, the visual circle profile provided by the Leadership Circle® assessment offered a basis for comparison between internally experienced evidence of mindful enactment of leadership and externally witnessed evidence of mindful enactment of leadership. The representation itself provided immediate feedback regarding the similarities and differences between how I rate my own leadership practice and how my colleagues rate my leadership practice. The data provided by the circle profile offered opportunities for further comparison, seeking commonalities between the self-observation and self-report measures and the assessments offered by colleagues.

Data collected through the Leadership Circle Profile™ is represented visually in a circle graphic, with the leader's self-assessment presented as a dark line and the average percentile score from feedback providers presented as a shaded area. Dividing the circle horizontally, the top half of the circle maps creative competencies key to leadership behavior including relating, self-awareness, authenticity, systems awareness, and purpose. The bottom half of the circle maps reactive tendencies that may limit leadership effectiveness including complying, protecting and controlling behaviors. Dividing the circle vertically, the left side maps relationship based competencies, such as interpersonal intelligence, integrity, and composure. The right half maps achievement based competencies, such as systems thinking, decisiveness, and focus.

Dimensions that are opposite one another on the circle are polarities, meaning they are opposing theoretically and behaviorally, for example, relating is opposite controlling, and achieving is opposite complying. The visual representation provided by the shaded areas suggests the degree to which the enactment of leadership comes from a creative or reactive orientation, and the degree to which the enactment of leadership comes from a relational or

achievement orientation. It also suggests the degree to which the leader's motivations are internally or externally driven (R. J. Anderson, 2006).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Attempts have been made by many researchers to articulate the criteria that describe characteristics of good qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). One highly influential and often cited work is Lincoln and Guba's (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, which set out to provide alternatives for qualitative research to ensure trustworthiness, replacing the positivistic adherence to validity, reliability and generalizability. To increase the robustness of the research design, I utilize the authors' four criteria of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Table 5 lists Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria and the techniques for establishing them. Trustworthiness within this autoethnophenomenography is therefore based on these criteria, as the traditional view of research providing access to absolute truths is not applicable to this method.

Table 5

Lincoln & Guba's (1985) Trustworthiness Criteria

Criteria	Techniques for Establishing Criteria
Credibility	(1) prolonged engagement (2) persistent observation (3) triangulation (4) member checking (5) archiving of data
Transferability	(1) thick description
Dependability	(1) triangulation
Confirmability	(1) interpretations and recommendations supported by data
All criteria	(1) reflexive journal about self and method

Similarly, Richardson (2000) proposed five criteria in the form of questions: Does the work contribute to our understanding of social life? (*substantive contribution*); Does the work succeed aesthetically? (*aesthetic merit*); Is the author's point of view clear? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure? (*reflexivity*); Does the work impact the reader emotionally or intellectually? Does it move new research practices? (*impact*); Does the work seem to be a credible account of lived-experience? Does it seem true? (*expression of reality*) (p. 937). It is ultimately the readers of the study who pass final judgment on the trustworthiness of the research, and as such, the quality of writing must communicate believability, and the knowledge offered must have relevance for use by others. Trustworthiness may be determined by the reader in asking the questions proposed by Richardson, or by simply inquiring, Does this study resonate with my own experience? and Is this study useful? (Loh, 2013).

Ethics

Ethical issues are particularly challenging within self-study approaches to research, because in telling one's own story, others are unavoidably implicated. Chang (2008) explains this unique ethical position, "As you play a multi-faceted role as researcher, informant, and author, you should be reminded that your story is never made in a vacuum and others are always visible or invisible participants in your story" (p. 69). As a participant-researcher, one must weigh the interests of the self against the rights of the other (Tolich, 2010). When considering the ethical implications of this study, I followed the recommendations offered by Tolich (2010) and Sikes (2015) as follows: (a) protect and respectfully depict the people whose lives are the substance of the research; (b) be alert to the potential misuse of interpretational and authorial power; (c) recognize the conflict of interest when seeking informed consent; (d) check in at each stage to make sure participants still want to be involved; (e) attempt to anticipate my own and

others' future vulnerabilities; and (f) publish no account or interpretation of experience that I would not show to the persons mentioned in the text.

Throughout all the phases of the research I followed the preceding recommendations as I strived to honor my commitment to conducting ethical research. Although the study is primarily raising a mirror so I can clearly see my own reflection, it asks others for their time and their vulnerability. Transparency was provided in disclosing the purpose of the study upfront, and in continued appraisal on the general nature of the inquiry as the study progressed. Recognizing the power imbalance, in that I hold a position that places me in a supervisory role, I emphatically communicated respect for others' privacy and their right to withdraw. Despite all efforts toward confidentiality, the reality of producing an authentic and true account of my own experience means that others may potentially be identifiable and identified, even if not explicitly named (Delamont, 2007; Sikes, 2015). In telling my story as I saw it, I had to remain cognizant of how the depictions of myself and others have consequences, and remain wary of including any details that may be personally or socially damaging. As the subject of my research, I also anticipated my own vulnerability and prepared for the self-exposure this endeavor demanded.

This research required a thoughtful process of negotiating relationships with colleagues. It added a new layer of complexity to our work together, intensifying and at times disturbing the normal flow of interaction. I was aware that relationships could facilitate or hinder the research, and at the same time the research could facilitate or hinder the relationships (Maxwell, 2013). What was a research study for me might be viewed as intrusion into the working lives of my colleagues, and as such, I had to continually reflect on the position I was putting them in. I inquired about their feelings and reactions, not assume I know their thoughts. I also continued

reflecting on my own purposes and assumptions, to be sure I was representing my experience, and their experiences, with truth.

A further consideration in committing to this research process was the “near schizophrenic” (Adler & Adler, 1987) nature of being a complete member researcher, who must participate in the activities of the setting while also observing and recording the activities of the setting. I had to be aware of how much time I spent in this disembodied state of mentally documenting my own activities, and how this impacted my enactment of leadership and my engagement as a member of my school community (L. Anderson, 2006a). It was necessary to keep in mind that I had dual commitments. I was simultaneously involved, as school leader, in the collaborative construction of meaning and, as researcher, in the analysis of the ways my participation was transforming my own and others’ understandings and relationships. I also had to be wary of allowing the scale to tip too far in either direction, not allowing my attention to drift from my research focus under the pressures and demands of my role as an educational leader, nor allowing myself to be so heavily drawn into my research that I was unable to participate as fully in the responsibilities of my work.

Limitations

This study was subject to the limitations true of all self-report measures, in that bias is a clear danger. Fieldnotes, from the very start, involve issues of perception and interpretation (van Manen, 1990). Fieldnotes are products of active processes of interpretation and sense-making that frame not only what is written, but how it is written. A writer presents a version of the world. What is offered is one account, made by a particular person at a particular time and place for a particular purpose.

van Manen (1990) describes:

On a fundamental level, a researcher's stance in note writing originates in her outlook on life. Prior experience, training, and commitments influence this stance, predisposing the fieldworker to feel, think, and act toward people in more or less patterned ways. Whether from a particular gender, social, cultural, political or theoretical position or orientation, the researcher not only interacts with and responds to the people in the setting from her own orientation, but also writes her fieldnotes by seeing and framing events accordingly (p. 90)

The written account functions "more as a filter than a mirror of reality" (van Manen, 1990, p. 46). As with any descriptive account, fieldnotes differ according to what the author selects and emphasizes as significant, which observations are featured and which are ignored or disregarded.

Social desirability was also a factor influencing this research. Social desirability in this particular study was three-fold, in the desire to be viewed as an effective practitioner of mindfulness, as an effective educational leader, and as an effective researcher. I had to consider what was left out of the fieldnotes, consciously or unconsciously and the danger that I could selectively record only that which reflects the socially desirable version of the self, rather than the full, inevitably flawed, true self.

There was also the difficulty in determining if it was mindfulness practice or other moderating variables that contributed to the reported cognitive, affective or physiological effects experienced. Genetics and personality could be contributing factors to the choices made in the enactment of leadership, and personal background and experience definitely play a significant part in how the role is carried out, as previously discussed. While understood as a state of consciousness which can be enhanced through training, mindfulness is also understood as a natural human capacity or trait (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003). Variations in trait levels of

mindfulness experienced by individuals are believed to be due to genetic predisposition as well as environmental influences (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015). The contextual elements of the workplace may contribute to an individual's behavior, emotions, and attention, opening up the possibility that certain features of the work environment may influence levels of mindfulness (Dane & Brummel, 2013). Further, there is also the element of time as a possible contributing factor, with relationships deepening and leadership evolving simply as an effect of ongoing interaction with colleagues and enactment of the role, rather than directly impacted by the leader's cultivation of mindfulness. This combination of personal and contextual factors could not be controlled for.

The non-traditional trustworthiness criteria connected to autoethnophenomenography as a method may also be viewed as limitations of the study, as the reliability, validity and generalizability of the findings are not able to be upheld to the same processes and standards as other types of research. Since the study focused on a singular leader in a specific context, this limits the knowledge claims that can be made from this research. This study has heuristic value, for educational leaders in other settings wanting to explore the potential of mindfulness, and relays a broader message about the need for support in developing a leader identity.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter provided a detailed description of the research methodology for this inquiry. An autoethnophenomenographic methodology was employed to illuminate the interplay between mindfulness practice and the enactment of leadership within the lived experiences of a private nursery school educational director. The data collection methods employed included a gathering of internal perspectives from a variety of journaling techniques, both structured and unstructured, and a gathering of external perspectives through a leadership

evaluation. The data were analyzed for emergent themes. Trustworthiness was accounted for through various strategies, including credibility and confirmability.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This study was undertaken to investigate a researcher-leader's attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice, examining how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership. A better understanding of the phenomenon of mindfulness and how it applies to the everyday practice of leadership may allow educational leaders a more informed perspective in terms of design and facilitation of leader development.

This chapter presents the key insights obtained from a six-month in-depth investigation of my own experience as an educational leader. The combination of the autoethnographic approach with phenomenology allowed me to examine and analyze my subjective experience of the connections between mindfulness and leadership. The lessons learned are in the form of my own understandings and insights based on my personal and professional experience, in conjunction with and comparison to the information gleaned from the related literature, as reviewed in Chapter Two. Therefore, it seems important here to return to some of the key understandings from the literature review, as these reflect the existing knowledge base upon which connections were made and meaning was created.

Assumptions brought to my experience, based upon information derived from previous research, included the following:

- (a) Leaders require experiences to grow their internal capacities and ways of knowing, in order to be better equipped to support and inspire growth in others (Drago-Severson, 2012).
- (b) The integration of behavioral, cognitive and social capacities at a deep level is thought to support continued growth and development, and prompt a more complex

understanding of self and a more expert level of leadership performance (Lord & Hall, 2005).

- (c) Mindfulness meditation offers systematic mental training that cultivates meta-awareness as clarity and equanimity increase (self-awareness), develops an ability to effectively modulate one's behavior (self-regulation), and brings about a positive relationship between self and other that transcends self-focused needs and increased prosocial characteristics (self-transcendence) (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012).
- (d) Through a combination of increased attention regulation, body awareness and emotion regulation, and expanding perspective, mindfulness meditation practice produces cognitive, affective and interpersonal benefits (Holzel, Lazar, et al., 2011).
- (e) An inquiry into the self prompts a leader to inquire into present practice and attend carefully to the limits of current meaning structures, leading to reflection on and adjustment of practice (Torbert & Associates, 2004).

Working from these assumptions, this research sought to connect the benefits attributed to mindfulness practice with the demands of leadership. In examining my own application of mindfulness meditation techniques toward developing self-awareness, self-regulation and self-transcendence, I sought to discover how this interacted with the development of my identity and professional practice as an educational leader.

Given the grounding of this study in personal experience, the analysis that follows will be written from a first-person perspective. This choice to make myself vulnerable and open to critique is made consciously and purposefully, as it is seen as the best means of communicating the realities of the experience. Though considered unorthodox in terms of most research, the first-person writing applied to this work is typical of autoethnographic and

autophenomenographic work, and as such, aligns with the approach that has been selected for this inquiry. The intention is to show the experience, not only tell about it, so that readers may connect with and respond to the work (Jones et al., 2013).

Pathway of Analysis

Applying processes of thick description (Chang, 2008; Denzin, 2014; Ellis & Adams, 2014; Emerson et al., 2011; L. Richardson, 1999; van Manen, 1990), I set out to document a broad range of experiences related to both the cultivation of mindfulness and the enactment of leadership, thereby providing an opportunity for the reader to enter into the doing and being of these engagements and better understand the reality of mindful educational leadership. The emphasis throughout this chapter is on letting the experience speak through illustrative quotations and self-perceptions, allowing the complexity of the demands of educational leadership to be communicated.

In seeking to understand the lived experience of mindful leadership, this study addressed three research questions:

1. What is my perceived connection between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of my professional role as an educational leader?
2. In what manner is the cultivation of mindfulness perceived to be present in my enactment of educational leadership?
3. How are my professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice?

Examining and analyzing my subjective experience of mindfulness and leadership, I attempted to answer these questions by making sense of the meaning attributed to the interactions and

situations I experienced on a day-to-day basis within my professional role. The act of writing as an exercise in self-consciousness made possible repeated instances of confronting my own experience from a disembodied perspective, creating a distance between self and experience and offering space for reflective awareness.

Coding Process

Data analysis, within this unique approach combining autoethnographic and phenomenological methods, proceeds slightly differently than in other qualitative processes. In most qualitative approaches, analysis entails construction from what others have shared as their experience to be able to retrieve the meaning in what has been observed and listened to as an outsider. In this study, as both the researcher and the researched, the classifying, comparing, weighing and combining material from the data happened primarily in process, with the finding, refining and elaborating of concepts occurring from day-to-day within the reporting and reflecting upon my own experience. With no separation between the researcher and the researched, between the living of experience and the researching of experience, the themes and theories that speak to the research questions were continuously unfolding in my mind.

However, this in-process analysis did not replace the need for careful and systematic examination of the data corpus, taking a retrospective view of experience and reliving it in order to either confirm or revise the initial ideas that had surfaced. Combining pieces of data across the full collection of fieldnotes and documents forced attention toward relationships between various aspects of experience, being able to separate self from experience and take macro view in order to recognize these connections.

Data Condensation

The stages of coding unfolded from an initial recognition of concepts, to a determination of categories, to a clarification and synthesis of patterns, to finally an elaboration of themes.

First cycle coding. Initial Coding began with a search through the data for the concepts explicitly raised in the fieldnotes and documents, as well as those indirectly revealed but clearly indicated. This open-ended process resulted in a wide range of codes in a variety of forms, and generated a substantial list of concepts, but did not offer much analytic insight, indicating a need for a more focused and systematic approach (First Cycle Codes, Appendix N). Identifying within the initial list a mix of descriptive nouns, direct quotes, and action verbs, I returned to the data with a more focused lens, applying Descriptive Coding, In Vivo Coding, and Process Coding methods (Saldana, 2016) separately in three subsequent line-by-line readings, layering these to gain insight into the topics of my recorded experience, the meanings inherent in that experience, and the actions and interactions within that experience.

In then examining the elaborated list of concepts that emerged from this second iteration of coding, new, related themes were identified as the initial concepts were linked to larger ideas, synthesizing the codes into categories. These Categorical Codes could be applied to larger units of data, allowing me to shift from a line-by-line approach to a more encompassing view of the fieldnotes and documents as I reviewed them anew. Recognizing how prevalent emotions were in the initial list of codes, further attention to the emotional content of the data was offered. Understanding that my internal emotional responses and outward actions and behaviors were strongly linked and intricately woven with my values and motivations, a second cycle of coding was determined as a critical next step in further analyzing my own experience (Categorical Codes, Appendix O).

Second cycle coding. Subsuming the expanded list of codes into subcategories, patterns began to surface with similar codes arranged and categorized into their larger meanings, such as Emotion, Quality of Presence, Interpersonal Qualities and Intrapersonal Qualities. Noting these patterns, I was led to Dramaturgical Coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Saldana, 2016) as a particular method of analysis because of the many parallels between the subcategories I had arranged and the system of codes suggested by this method. Dramaturgical Coding provided an opportunity to explore the intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences and actions embedded in the enactment of leadership, and aided me in attuning to the qualities, emotions, values and motivations that influence the potential for drawing upon mindfulness techniques in a given situation. Returning to the literature, I consulted the models for mindfulness (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012) and leadership (R. J. Anderson & Adams, 2016) that I am applying to this study. In adding the concepts embedded in the models of mindfulness and leadership to the list of subcategories elicited from the first cycle of coding, I determined a Dramaturgical Coding (Saldana, 2016) scheme based on the perception of life as performance, using conventions of character (Objectives, Conflicts, Tactics, Values, Emotions and Subtext) as the main categorical labels (Dramaturgical Codes, Appendix P).

This second cycle of coding helped to draw attention to points of comparison and offer new insight. For example, this process allowed me to attach the instances of emotion with the events and situations where these were identified, and begin to look for commonalities between these experiences. In so doing, this forced greater clarity about the connection between action and emotion, and enabled me to think more deeply about the antecedents to the arising of emotions. Through this particular lens, I was better able to track my emotional journey and to reflect upon my responses to the experience of these emotions, the impact my responses had on

myself and others, and whether or not direct connections could be drawn between the strategies for managing these emotions and my mindfulness practice. Having now worked out a broader understanding of the role emotions play in my day-to-day enactment of educational leadership and the impact my mindfulness practice has on my ability to self-regulate and negotiate situations where strong emotions are present, I decided to return again to the data to look for further examples, comparing instances of the application of mindfulness techniques to my day-to-day practice and progressively defining, refining and labeling these connected concepts.

Third cycle coding. Finally, I sought to draw some conclusions by taking all that I had learned from the previous processes of essence capturing and reducing the data to identify its many dimensions, to now reconsolidate the various ideas and concepts into theories. Having a much deeper understanding of the data and all that was contained in my record of experience, I returned to my research questions with new insight, now prepared to make sense of my experience and interpret the significance. I sought to engage in processes to identify the connections between mindfulness practice and the enactment of leadership. Scanning the coded and reorganized data and taking note of the Objectives and Tactics applied to leadership, particularly in response to Conflicts, I began to put together data with related codes attributing connection with the symbol > (Third Cycle Coding Example, Appendix R).

Emerging Themes

Several themes emerged in the process of analysis, becoming apparent through in-process memos during the data collection period and gaining clarification once the data had been transcribed, coded, and analyzed. First, within a deepening self-awareness, themes of identity, emotion, and memory surfaced in the examination of the synthesized data, highlighting the vital importance of the internal, feeling aspects of my enactment of leadership. Second, an expanding

ability for self-reflection revealed the constancy of the internal struggle, and the freedom that arose within the space offered by a mindful approach, when I could separate self from experience. Third, the broadening of perception through increasing self-transcendence allowed for the letting go of attachments to my own ways of seeing and doing, increasing understanding of others' points of view and decreasing judgment and blame in situations of conflict. These three themes prompted the approach that is taken in the next section, which presents the findings in three separate voices.

Findings

Honoring the “near-schizophrenia” that is an embedded part of applying a self-study approach to research, the analysis that follows will appear in three parts. These three parts present the three different voices that are necessary to offer a comprehensive picture of experience: the Leader’s own voice in the living of and recording of the experience, the Researcher’s voice in the process of synthesizing and analyzing the collected data, and the Researcher-Leader’s voice in taking a comprehensive view of experience and outsider’s assessments of leadership behavior to make sense of these multiple perspectives. The additional clarity that is offered by the Researcher-Leader (the self of the present) examining the Leader (self of the past) from the inside view and outside view provides an opportunity to make sense of the lived experience from a perspective that could not have been taken in the actual moments.

Though blurred lines exist between the themes, and evidence of each can be seen within each of the voices, each of the voices can be viewed as the primary speaker for each of the themes. The Leader’s voice can be most directly tied to the theme of a deepening self-awareness, and the communication of identity, emotion and memory. The Researcher’s voice primarily reflects the internal struggle and a separation of self from experience. The Researcher-

Leader's voice most accurately portrays the themes of letting go of attachments and an increasing ability to understand others' points of view.

Key findings emerge from each of these voices, and are shared at the close of each section, and offer an invitation to the reader to verify the trustworthiness of the research based on the criteria outlined in Chapter Three. Readers may wish to consider the questions offered by Richardson (2000) while proceeding through the chapter as a measure of the quality of the research: Does the work succeed aesthetically? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure? Does the work have an emotional or intellectual impact? Does it seem to be a credible account of lived experience? (p. 937).

Table 6 describes the types of data yielded from each source and how each contributed to the different voices of Leader, Researcher, and Researcher-Leader. The table is offered as a depiction of how the different data sources are triangulated and support each other to determine the findings. Though each voice drew upon the full collection of data, the approach to the data differs for each of the perspectives. The Leader took a chronological and holistic view of the full data set, combining sources and examining the whole for salient pieces that could serve to represent experience as it was lived. The Researcher, taking a very different perspective, examined the data set as it has been broken apart and reconfigured. The Researcher looked at the sorted data pieces separately and together to search for patterns and trends. Finally, the Researcher-Leader combined these views, integrating the Leader's experience as lived and the Researcher's noted patterns and applied these in comparison to the data provided by the Leadership Circle Profile™. This allowed the internal perspective to be compared and contrasted with the external perspective.

Table 6

Data Contributing to Voices

Data Collection Method	Data Collected	Contributions to Voices
Reflective Journal	informal notes on the self, the practice of mindfulness, the practice of educational leadership, and the research process as they occurred	Leader Researcher
Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA)	self-observation applied in the moment while participating in the ongoing events of the day, including meta-analysis prompted by a series of questions	Leader Researcher
Day Reconstruction Method (DRM)	recollection of key features of episodes identified throughout the day, assessed with a rating scale to indicate the intensity of states of self-awareness, self-reflection and self-transcendence	Leader Researcher
Documents	emails, blog posts, written feedback, and existing school documents I had authored	Leader Researcher
Leadership Circle Profile Assessment	external feedback on leadership performance gathered by anonymous survey of colleagues	Researcher-Leader

The following section will present a synopsis of the Leader's lived experience. This section serves to illustrate the day-to-day challenges of the leadership role in this particular context, and to highlight the cognitive, relational and emotional demands of the work. The full data set enabled the construction of the narrative, with episodes selected from the reflective journal, EMA and DRM diary entries, and self-authored documents to craft a representation of

experience that reflects the complexity of leadership and the transformative aspects of mindfulness practice as they were lived.

In selecting excerpts from the collected data to create this chronological vignette, it is my intention in this section to offer a broad range of experiences related to the enactment of leadership, thereby providing an opportunity for the reader to enter into the doing and being of this work. As stated in the chapter introduction, the emphasis throughout is on letting the experience speak through illustrative quotations and self-perceptions, allowing the demands of educational leadership to be communicated and the applications of mindfulness to be illuminated. Intentionally presented as a retrospective narrative, the Leader voice is offered to the data to make the research accessible and recognizable as experience, and to provide an authentic and articulate description of the particular challenges of the role. The reader should note that this retrospective narrative is not a recollection of experience, though it reads as such, but is in fact a consequence of the systematic and detailed recording of experience.

The Leader

My current professional role places me in a distinct position. As Educational Director, I exist “in between” teachers and administrators. The primary functions of this role, as indicated on the job description, are to support and supervise teachers in their efforts to create safe and stimulating learning environments for children, and to keep the director informed of pertinent issues regarding children, program and parents. The responsibilities of this role, as described to me in conversation, are to act as the connection and communication between teachers and administration.

My career path also places me “in between.” As someone relatively new to administration, my identity remains more teacher than leader at present, and my perspective

continues to be drawn from my years of experience in the classroom while I begin to build experience as a leader. Having stepped out of the classroom and into leadership only recently, I am able to approach my work with a depth of understanding of the on-the-ground realities of teaching, which serves me well in my primary responsibility of supporting the performance and professional growth of teachers. However, holding this teacher perspective so strongly has brought about various tensions, as I sit amidst others on the administrative team who have more experience in leadership and therefore are more accustomed to taking a much wider leader perspective. Others on the administrative team have role designations and job descriptions that are more clearly system-focused, as opposed to my primarily teacher- and classroom-focused role, and therefore, have a strong commitment to the system as a whole.

Navigating these tensions has not been easy. A steep learning curve characterizes my first four years in the role of leader, learning a great deal very quickly, and meeting tremendous challenges with significant effort. At the end of the last school year, in response to the anonymous feedback offered on the annual teacher survey, I took the time to share in writing some of my professional reflections with the faculty, highlighting the challenges that I continue to face and areas of growth I had identified and intended to focus on this year:

In the whole of my career in early childhood, this role of Educational Director is one of unprecedented demands and pressures. The constant small crises, heavy responsibilities, and perpetual need to support and inspire people can be exhausting. It requires me to constantly give of myself and to continually put others first. . .

Often all the time and effort invested and personal sacrifices made to sustain the community go unnoticed and unappreciated, meaning there is little within the role itself as far as reward, replenishment or renewal . . .

There are responsibilities within my role that are much more challenging for me, given my introverted personality and natural way of being . . .

I often choose writing over in the moment, face-to-face discussion because writing gives me the time to think carefully about the words used and to ensure clarity, but I also often have no choice. Writing can be achieved in any moment, without demanding the scheduling of a particular window of time that suits all parties, which within our extremely busy timetables is so difficult to find. (I do not draft emails at 5 a.m. because I enjoy getting straight to work as soon as I wake up. I do so because it is often the only hour of the day that I have time to breathe and think!) . . .

I will make every effort to give more attention to in person dialogue, and to providing clarity in verbal communication . . .

In my third year, I have still not perfected the art of balancing all of the needs of children, parents, teachers and administration . . . but I will keep working to be everywhere I need to be, and to allow my presence to be equally felt within each group (Email: Reflections 2015/16, 06-25-2016).

This was my starting point for the school year – needs that were bubbling to the surface. The need for reward, replenishment, or renewal. The need for connection and effective communication. The need for autonomy and individual understanding. The need for collaboration and support. The need for balance. The need for full presence. In offering these written reflections to colleagues, however, the expression of my particular predicament within this role was not consciously driven by my internal need to be seen and understood. Instead, my conscious focus was primarily external. My concern was about meeting other people's

expectations and fulfilling their needs. I must be better at communicating. I must find more time for people to offer them face-to-face conversation and attention. I must . . .

Fall. The beginning of the school year provided time to invest in the development of a consistent mindfulness practice, establishing routines and strategies that could be embedded into my everyday experience with regularity. These months from September to December were also a time of incredible challenge and frustration, as the constant small crises, heavy responsibilities, and perpetual need to support and inspire people continued to demand all of my energy.

Does anyone have any idea how BUSY I am? In an effort to be everywhere I needed to be, to offer my presence in classrooms consistently and equally and create the opportunity for more face-to-face time (as requested), I scheduled my days over a two-week timeframe. Following one timetable in “even” weeks and another timetable in “odd” weeks, I attempted to spread myself around so I could be in every classroom and meet with every team with dependable consistency. I entered each scheduled classroom or meeting appointment into my calendar so that my phone could alert me and remind me where I was supposed to be when, as I had no chance of keeping this timetable in my mind. From classroom to classroom to meeting to classroom I ran . . .

I shared my timetable of classroom visits and team meetings with all members of the faculty so everyone would have the information about where I intended to be on a given day at a given time. Repeatedly, attempts were made by members of the administration team to schedule meetings, but suggestions were always during times I had already designated toward my primary function of supporting teachers and children. By the end of October, the need to repeatedly state how packed my schedule was provoked aggravation that began to seep into the tone of my

communication. This response to a Sunday evening request from another administrator to “find time to catch up this week” serves as an example:

This week I have meetings every single morning and all lunchtimes already booked.

Tomorrow after the school day ends I need to catch up with (a teacher) on an important conversation we barely started on Friday and had no opportunity to finish. Do you want to catch up on the phone today before I start my insanely busy week tomorrow?

I interpreted a disregard for my role and my responsibilities each time my schedule appeared not be considered or considered but disregarded. My aggravation was not well hidden in this exchange:

Administrator: Let’s meet on Friday at 12:15.

Me: I’m observing (in a particular classroom) until it ends at 12:40. Odd week schedule this week. I’m available Friday lunch time on Even weeks only.

Administrator: Let’s try for 8:00.

Me: I have a team meeting with (a particular team) Friday mornings, Odd week schedule. The only time I have open on Friday is after 4:00 when the day is over. I did give you copies of my schedule, didn’t I? Let me know if I didn’t.

I grew more and more frustrated as these types of exchanges persisted. A few weeks later in an email, I again go into great detail about the extremely limited time I have available, outlining the reality that my work week has no open time from 8 a.m. through to the very end of the day. The lack of flexibility I have within the demands on my time remains unaddressed, and the exchange results in a meeting being tacked onto my schedule, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

The absence of balance. I did not expect or demand any sort of balance for myself, and set no boundaries on my time. Weekends were no different from weekdays in terms of hours

spent in work mode. Though not physically present in the school building, my time was dedicated to all the computer-based tasks that I could not get to while being fully engaged in classrooms with teachers and children. The weekends from September to December, as evident on my calendar and in my email exchanges, are filled with tasks such as:

- editing and publishing teachers' documentation,
- providing detailed feedback on documentation,
- sending messages of affirmation to new faculty members in their first weeks,
- sending out meeting agendas with invitations for any further additions,
- writing up minutes of meetings to share with faculty,
- preparing for one-on-one feedback meetings with teachers,
- thanking each teacher in writing for his or her time and contributions in meetings,
- advising teachers on communication with parents about sensitive issues (reviewing draft emails),
- organizing meeting times with parents or outside service providers,
- rearranging my schedule to help teachers as needed,
- altering meeting schedules to accommodate for other conflicting needs,
- reviewing classroom Curriculum Night presentations and preparing my own,
- editing and providing feedback on children's written reports,
- reading educational blogs and articles and sharing interesting or relevant items with faculty . . .

The list goes on and on.

A comment made in passing during an administrative meeting that "nothing really happens in July and August," describing a relatively light workload, had me reeling. Noticeably,

I was often the only administrator at school for spans of days during the summer months, while others took their vacations and had fewer responsibilities that called for immediate attention.

Perhaps “nothing really happens in July and August” was true for some. I, however, continued to have an extraordinary amount of work to do between school years.

Summer, for me, was a time requiring a considerable amount of manual labor, tasked with the unpacking of boxes, distribution of new classroom furniture and materials and the reorganizing of closets that had become unbearably disheveled over the course of the year just finished. It was also a time of computer-based tasks, preparing all documents for the start of the next year and updating all of the technology equipment. Most importantly, it was my time of deep reflection and thinking, determining goals for the coming year and planning experiences for the teachers as they were welcomed back that would help us to deepen our relationships with one another and our collective commitment to our school values and aims.

The idea that “nothing really happens in July and August” confounded me, and I met these feelings of my work being unnoticed or unvalued with aggravation. The growing frustration I was feeling continued to become more evident on the outside, so much so that, as I relayed to a friend, “I just got called in for a meeting to be told I’m coming across angry and hostile. How’s that for a Happy Friday!”

Finding a voice that could be heard. In the first months of the school year, I made a conscious effort to be much more expressive with my thinking and not hold back when issues arose, as I had so frequently done in the past. The question of whether this open and honest communication could at times come across as confrontational was at the forefront of my mind, and hesitation continued to plague my efforts toward sharing my thoughts and feelings. The discomfort was two-fold: general discomfort with self-expression, being more introverted and

having a strong preference for listening over speaking, and a more focused discomfort, with conflict and confrontation. Though my intention was to approach issues in a way that could lead to productive conversation rather than argument, at times I had to pause and run draft statements by a colleague to verify that my tone was one of invitation for discussion rather than an emotional rant. The constant anger, frustration, irritation and aggravation under the surface did not go unnoticed. I could feel these emotions coloring my language and at times, had the wherewithal to recognize when another's advisement would be helpful.

This increase in open expression was a major shift in my behavior, and I sense that it caught others by surprise. In my first three years in the role of Educational Director, I adhered strongly to the conventional wisdom of going along to get along. This was driven by my naiveté about this particular school context, to which I was new, and about all things leadership, to which I was also new. However, entering into my fourth year as a leader, something within me provoked an inability to continue turning a blind eye (or more accurately, an unexpressed voice) to the ethics of some of our administrative practices. While I continued to hold on to cooperation as a value and desired harmony within working relationships, suddenly I found myself with the courage and the desire to disagree, and to raise issues that others were avoiding.

The period of months from September through December were filled with incidents revealing the different, often conflicting priorities amongst members of the administrative team. I faced a constant struggle to communicate my perspective and to feel heard and understood. By November, this struggle became more visible in my written exchanges. I sent out a reflection to the administration team with questions to consider about how a specific administrative practice was perceived by teachers and families and how this translated to the overall school culture. I directly indicated that when it came to priorities, we had different ways of looking at the

situation. Hoping to open the topic up for discussion, my questions were interpreted as an attack and were met with a great deal of defensiveness. I found myself sitting in a conversation in a state of disbelief, as nothing I was saying appeared to be registering. “We’re not communicating,” was all I could offer, at a loss for how to make myself heard.

Amidst all the usual efforts of supporting new teachers who had just joined our faculty, supporting new teams of teachers who were just coming together in collaborative relationships, advising teachers in their delicate relationships with parents, establishing systems to support effective communication and collaboration, and attempting to address the constant problem of “there’s never enough time,” I had to face deeper dilemmas surrounding my own identity as a leader and the practices of leadership. I began to sense a real struggle between my own integrity and the practices and structures I was being asked to support.

Part of being positioned in the in-between is the reality that others have power over me, and make the final decisions that affect our practices of teaching and learning. Mounting frustration characterized September to December, as situations and interactions reminded me of my particular place in the hierarchy of administration. Statements made to trusted colleagues such as “I have been vetoed,” and “Looks like a conversation was had in my absence and a reversal of the decision has happened” hinted at the underlying feeling of disempowerment and deepening cynicism that persisted through this time period.

Inasmuch as I was gaining the ability to speak my mind more openly, I also faced multiple situations in which my voice was not even included in the discussion. In some situations, I abandoned the direct approach and instead began to model the inclusive behaviors and actions I desired, to demonstrate the value of collaboration. I offered statements such as, “It might be helpful to have everyone looking at this together,” and “Having the agenda ahead of

time would be beneficial. I know I benefit from some additional time pulling my thoughts together before jumping into a discussion,” attempting to identify certain practices that I desired in our administrative meetings. I instituted a new practice of keeping and sharing meeting notes for various team and grade level meetings, “for greater transparency and consistent communication,” hinting at these valued practices which I felt were lacking in our current systems.

Winter. The term from January to March began with the same strong emotions that characterized the Fall. My internal turmoil began to be reflected in the external environment. January seems to be the time of year when everything begins to crumble, and in this state of feeling overworked and unable to be available, I had to meet a high demand for support from others. Teaching teams began to show signs of dysfunction and need help navigating their working relationships; concerns about children’s development had to be addressed with parents now that we had months of observational data to draw upon; teachers began showing signs of physical and emotional strain and absences increased.

This was also a time of increased demand on the entire faculty, as we welcomed interested families in for tours of the school and dove deeply into the process of admissions for the following school year, while concurrently welcoming admissions observers from ongoing schools to which our current students had applied. The constant flow of people through the school had a negative impact on the children and teachers, whose normal routines were constantly disrupted and who felt constantly on display.

Teachers began appearing more regularly in my office, and reaching out asking if I had “time to meet,” seeking a safe space to vent their frustrations and express their challenges. Inevitably, tears flowed in many of these interactions as the beginning months in school began to

take their toll and the wear and tear that was being felt inside needed to be surfaced. While teachers often walked out of these individual conversations with some sense of relief, expressing their gratitude for the support and help, the exchanges often left me feeling more drained and depleted, having taken on all the others' emotions that were being unloaded. The reality of my own inner state of exhaustion could no longer be ignored, and I began making changes to how I approached my life and work.

Letting go. With increasing attention to the realities of my role, I let go of any adherence to a set timetable. Recognizing that certain teachers and certain classrooms were in need of some focused support, I was forced to make more conscious choices about how and where to spend my time. Rather than approach my role with the intention of maintaining a strictly equal presence across classrooms, I began to divide my time according to where the greatest needs were.

"I'm starting to feel a little overwhelmed with all this . . ." a teacher reached out, and I surmised that this was a vast understatement of the emotion and stress under the surface. I was determined to spend extended time in this room. "Today it begins . . ." another teacher reminded me, signaling her need to depart early one day each week to be able to get to her graduate school class on time. I needed to be sure I could be available at the end of the day every Tuesday to step into this classroom and assist in her place. Teachers got sick, teachers' children got sick and needed to be picked up from daycare or school, children got sick and needed to sit outside the classroom while waiting for a parent to arrive and take them home – all situations that demanded that I drop everything and step in to whichever classroom was a teacher down.

The simple act of committing to 20-30 minutes each morning to mindful meditation was a first step toward creating more time for the self. Adding in multiple mindfulness reminders from my phone throughout each day helped to reinforce the notion that moments of pause were a

necessity. As the benefits of these initial measures instituted in the Fall began to be felt and consciously recognized, a more honest assessment of my internal energy level and ability to focus became the norm. Rather than ignoring or denying feelings of depletion, as was typical behavior in the past, decisions to reserve space in the day and week for renewal began to be made.

In stark contrast to the Fall, when I maintained a constant “work-mode” straight through the weekend, I began to commit more effort to self-care. “I’m incredibly proud of myself,” I tell my colleague as I arrive on a Monday morning. “I did NOTHING this weekend! I mean it – I didn’t even think about school. I didn’t read or respond to any emails. I didn’t edit any stories. I just let myself decompress and binge watched Netflix. Can you believe it?! I actually got outside for a run – it was amazing.”

In offering this time for myself, I experienced a shift in my responses to issues or challenging situations. The reactive emotions and thoughts that prompted my speaking up in the Fall were diminished by a deepening connection to experience. While the reactive emotions continued to surface, mindfulness practice offered the space to move beyond the initial reactive emotions and judgments, and to summon the presence of mind needed to courageously surface issues and speak directly.

To offer one example, a passing comment indicating an administrator’s lack of awareness that a parent meeting had been scheduled was delivered to me as a shout out into the hallway as I breezed past her office, with a hint of blame. Without directly saying so, it was clear that the message was she should have been informed, and that it is my fault that she was not apprised of this meeting. My old self would have let this go, pretended not to hear the comment as I was rushing past her office into the meeting, and carried on under the guise that all was well, all the

while stewing inside and likely emitting some passive-aggressive behaviors. This time I felt a need to address it, knowing for certain that the information was readily available and wanting to problem solve the miscommunication productively, yet also address how the comment seemed to have an undertone of accusation that I was not doing my job effectively. Even as I held back some of what I was feeling, the message was clear. The current system for sharing information appeared to be failing us, and I offered the suggestion that we more clearly determine “how this information should be shared, so you don’t feel uninformed and I don’t feel that I’m being accused of not keeping you up to date.” Rather than walk around stewing over it for the rest of the day, I spoke my mind and got to move on.

From January to March my voice gained clarity. I let go of any pretense, and attempted to speak honestly, but calmly, about issues. I shared thoughts about the admissions process and the ethical questions it brought to my mind. I shared my true assessment of the school’s progress toward the major recommendations offered by the state accreditation board. I did so with the full knowledge that my reflections would need to be spun for the final report (honesty was not an option, here), but with hope that by identifying the areas where we haven’t demonstrated much growth, an internal dialogue would open. I spoke up when expectations appeared unreasonable, or timelines were suggested that were not humanly possible to achieve.

Adhering to values. My efforts during this time period were primarily aimed at promoting a more collaborative approach to some of our systems. Pushing back against the traditional, hierarchical structure that typified most decision-making in the school, I began to openly question these practices and seek new ways of including teachers in the discussions that impact their day-to-day experiences in the classroom. The need for consideration that I felt deeply, I also recognized in teachers and heard them express.

One particular situation prompted me to confront the absence of teacher input directly. An administrator made promises to parents regarding classroom practices without first consulting the teachers. This norm of parents approaching administrators directly and getting immediate agreement to a request is one I have internally struggled with, particularly when parent needs appear to supersede teacher needs. My old self would have left unsaid the belief that discussion with the teachers was warranted, prior to any communication with parents, as they are the people who are tasked with carrying out the requests that have been made. Though nervous, I also had a new confidence in expressing needs and illuminating issues that negatively impact the teacher-administrator relationship. Describing as clearly as possible what the day will look like for teachers if they were asked to make the requested accommodations, I conveyed that what was being asked was not possible and I gained the result I was seeking. I felt understood. The teacher experience appeared to be better understood. Responsibility was taken for the misstep and the parents were brought into a new conversation to determine a solution that could work for everyone.

This small success, though celebrated at the time, was just a small success, however, and over time I had to accept the reality of my situation. Failed attempts to enter teachers more fully into decision-making process solidified my understanding of a difference in perspective among members of the administrative team that I had been experiencing over my four years in this role. Collaboration, as a value, was fully supported and encouraged within teaching teams and among teachers as a faculty, but the idea of collaboration on the administrative side, or between teachers and administration, was not supported to the level I would have liked. I began to notice language and behavior that hinted at these underlying beliefs, such as administrators using singular Me,

My or I rather than We, Our or Us when discussing major decisions, and the conscious and purposeful holding back of information from teachers to maintain full control of processes.

A statement made by an administrator to teachers indicating “your feedback is invaluable to the process,” while intended to signify the inclusion of teachers in decisions, actually served to highlight the difference in how I and other members of administration defined “inclusion.” I wanted to support teachers being included from the beginning of the process, providing genuine opportunities for input into decisions. Other members of administration, however, preferred to keep the primary decision making to a select team, including teachers only in the final stages by soliciting their feedback on the end result.

At the start of January, I had already begun to have doubts about whether this context was a good fit for my values and beliefs and the way I wanted to practice leadership. The frequent bumping up against brick walls that I experienced when attempting to move systems or practices forward into a direction that more closely aligned with what I envisioned had left me feeling bruised and depleted, and diminished the hope I once felt regarding what was possible to achieve within my position. The winter months were filled with continued experiences forcing me to confront the differences in my values and the values of others on the administrative team. I recall tearfully questioning a colleague one afternoon, “Do you think I have any chance of being effective in my role?”

Sitting with these thoughts and emotions day after day, giving them focused attention and searching deeply with each breath, my mindful meditation practice allowed me the space to recognize that all my attempts to change our practices were based on what I valued and the beliefs that I held, but these were not shared by others. As I wrote in my journal, I noted that the struggle I had been experiencing from the beginning of the year through the winter months was

due to a failure to see things “as they are.” I settled on a realization that though all administrators were fully committed to providing high quality early childhood education, our ideas about what this looks like and how it is best supported were different.

By March, I had come to a decision to resign from the role of Educational Director, and to depart from this school context. Relaying the news to a colleague and friend about the new position I had accepted in another setting, I was asked what informed the decision. My reply, stating that it was “how committed they are to their vision and beliefs” and that “there are no compromises when it comes to what they know to be best practice” indicated without explicit statement the realization that the current context I was in had a different set of beliefs, and a vision that did not match my own. I had come to understand that the context I was in was not allowing me to express my full self, nor to fully explore the leader I wanted to be.

The decision to resign opened up a new opportunity, to step back and examine my current role with less attachment, resulting in a proposal to redesign the role in a way that could better support teachers, children, parents, and the Educational Directors themselves— meaning two people. Having been deemed “Superwoman” more times than I could count over the last four years, separating myself from the role I could now see that it was an impossible ask for one human being to take on all these responsibilities. “I don’t know how you do all that you do,” was a frequent comment, and I had to admit, the self-sacrifice that I had allowed in order to accomplish all that I did in my role had taken its toll. My physical, emotional, and mental health had suffered due to my inability to maintain a healthy work-life balance, and the time spent in meditation was allowing me to face this fact and experience the benefits of shifting back toward a more balance between the personal and professional aspects of my being.

Though I hadn't advocated at all for myself regarding the extraordinary challenge of maintaining efficacy under the extreme demands of associated with the position, it was easy for me to defend the reorganization of the position for the sake of the humanity of the next person (or now, people) being tasked with these responsibilities. I could be more upfront and honest about the need for any leader to have time and space to reflect and replenish, but particularly the leader in this role, who was asked constantly to hold others' problems, complaints and emotions.

Spring. Attempting to integrate my mindfulness practice into my day-to-day practice of leadership, self-regulation, self-awareness, and self-transcendence were my constant goals. In some cases these goals were met, and in others, I was not as successful in maintaining a mindful approach. Challenging emotions continued to be the norm throughout the final months of the school year, though now brought on by a new state of the in between – having one foot in and one foot out the door as I prepared to exit. I recognized, in certain situations, a conscious pulling back or withdrawing from participation, a choice to remove myself from certain aspects of decision making about the following school year with the knowledge that I would not be a part of carrying out those decisions or directly impacted by them. However, there were also occasions in which I was not invited to weigh in on decisions, likely for the same reasons, but when the choice was not my own there were feelings of resentment and anger that had to be recognized and regulated.

Transitioning. With an increasingly widening perspective, and space created between my perspective and response, I began to approach strong emotions in a more productive and accepting way. For example, frustrated by the repeated rehearsal an administrator demanded of an announcement that would be made to the faculty, my initial interpretation of this demand to go over and over what will be said was that there is a lack of trust in me and fear over what I

might say. With some breathing, I was able to offer space to feel these initial emotions and move beyond, arriving at the understanding that rehearsal is how this person copes with her anxiety. I'd seen it over and over again in our time working together. Though it isn't my preferred way of engaging with people, the formality of large group presentation is comfortable for this person and the repeated rehearsal is viewed as a necessary practice. I sensed the administrator's anxiety over the transition, and rather than react to the controlling behaviors that were being exhibited, I was able to empathize with how this all must feel from her perspective.

The announcement of my impending departure appeared to raise the anxiety of many people, as any change has the tendency to do. The knowledge that I would be leaving did little to reduce the demand on my time and attention, and in a way, seemed to increase the demand as individuals began to recognize the continually decreasing amount of time I would be present and available. With a conscious effort to focus my attention, I remained invested in all that was happening during the last months of the school year. I met with teachers, I offered feedback, I supported in classrooms, and I began the process of handing over all my knowledge and responsibilities to the two who would be stepping in and splitting my role.

Even so, there were many moments when I felt scattered, despite my morning meditation practice, somehow unable to maintain the sense of calm presence that I might have achieved in those early morning minutes of focused attention to the breath.

8:15 a.m. I've arrived late, walked straight into a team meeting and haven't even put my things down when it begins – "You're covering this morning, right?" a teacher catches me in passing in the hallway. "We'll be in the gym." Yes, that's right. I'm supposed to be stepping in for a teacher first thing.

“Someone’s coming today?!” I hear my colleague say aloud as she reads an email on her phone – talking aloud to herself or to me, I’m not sure – but this reminds me, there’s an interview scheduled this afternoon.

8:55 a.m. A child is crying in the hallway – he needs my attention. Just as soon as I can put down my things . . . A teacher stands in the doorway of my office, excited about the potential new planning tool she’s discovered and wanting feedback? approval? recognition? I can’t tell. In any case, it’s clear she’s eager to discuss and wanting to do so this minute.

8:57 a.m. I put my bag down and catch a glimpse of the envelope that is inside. The envelope that I was supposed to stamp and mail yesterday.

8:58 a.m. The teacher is still excitedly talking but I’ve stopped listening. UGH. I just can’t. I haven’t even eaten breakfast or had coffee yet this morning. And I’m running late to get to the gym in time to cover for that teacher . . .

There were days like this when it felt impossible to be mindful. The nature of leadership at times seemed to fight against rather than support a mindful approach. With so much thrown at me in a matter of minutes, how was I supposed to maintain focused attention on anything?

Particularly during these last months of the school year, having introduced yet another layer to the in-between by wearing both the leader hat and the researcher hat at the same time, my ability to feel mindful was not a constant. I was often caught in my own thoughts as I attempted to meet both the demands of research and the demands of my leadership role. “How are you doing?” a teacher inquired in passing. “I feel like we haven’t really talked in a while. You seem very much in your own head these days.” She assumed this was due to the transition and my upcoming move, but I explained it was all to do with the constant headnotes I was

attempting to mentally record for my research, holding them in mind until I could find the space and time to write them down.

There was a running commentary in my mind, an anxiety about the need to write and craft my own story before all the details were lost. As I began to inch closer toward the end of the data collection period and enter into the phase of comprehensive analysis, I found myself wondering whether the act of researching mindful leadership might have interfered with or diminished my actual potential for being a more mindful leader. Wouldn't that be ironic?

At the end of May, I began to shift my perspective entirely from the being and the doing of leadership to the analysis of this experience. The shift in perspectives required in this transition from actively living experience to retrospectively analyzing experience now demands a shift in voice as this section of the paper ends and the next begins. However, before leaving the perspective of The Leader, the crafting of this vignette, as a reflection on experience in its entirety, allows an initial finding to emerge:

Finding 1. *Over time, the practice of mindfulness became an embedded part of my way of thinking and being, and was perceived as organically integrated into the daily practice of leadership.*

The increasing attention regulation, emotion regulation, and non-attachment cultivated through mindfulness meditation practice can be seen emerging in the daily practices of leadership in the later months of the school year. Some of the identifiers that emerged as evidence of the embeddedness of mindfulness in leadership were the improved work-life balance, the openness to different perspectives, and the increased empathy and interpersonal attunement.

The Leader voice will now give way to the Researcher voice. In the section that follows, an outside perspective will be applied to the collected and coded data to analyze the patterns which reveal the interplay between mindfulness and leadership.

The Researcher

Stepping back from the living of and recording of experience to analyze the collected data, the multiple cycles of coding (as described in this chapter's section on the pathway of analysis) allowed for the reduction and reconsolidation of the data into ideas and concepts, moving from the whole of experience to individual parts of experience. Separating out pieces and chunks of data to discover the stories within the story, I could better understand how my experience could serve to answer my research questions. Looking back over the written accounts of experience offered across journal entries, EMA and DRM diary entries, and self-authored documents (hereafter referred to collectively as "accounts"), my perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the practice of leadership, the presence of mindfulness within my practice of leadership, and the influence of mindfulness practice on my interpersonal interactions became visible in the patterns in the data and how these patterns changed over time.

A broadening perspective. An examination of the coding of the data over time revealed patterns in the content of my record of experience. Early accounts of my experience are primarily self-referential and highly emotionally driven, with evidence of rumination. Instances of irritation, frustration, distress and feelings of isolation are frequently noted. Maintaining composure and masking these emotions appears to take precedence over other possible strategies. This is noted in the quantity of codes applied to early accounts, with emotion codes applied most frequently to statements, exchanges and other segments of data, and the tactic of composure appearing with the most frequency across the data set from the Fall.

An example of the picture provided by the quantities of each category of codes is offered in Tables 7 and 8. Table 7 provides the journal entry in its entirety as it has been coded, while Table 8 collects the codes into categories so the quantity of each category can be more easily recognized. Emotions can be seen at the forefront of my experience as it has been recorded, with seven separate emotion codes being applied to this one reflective journal entry. Also visible is the primarily negative tone of these emotions, the judgmental subtext lingering under the surface of the words, and the singular objective reflecting a “work-mode” mentality.

The heavy emotional tone indicated by the high quantity of emotional codes points to an internal perspective, with a strong focus on the self and the experience from within. “I’m aggravated. . .” this particular reflective journal entry reveals, “by the lack of consideration for my time and my responsibilities . . . No one seems to have any understanding for how limited my time is.” This is a consistent pattern across early written accounts, with emotions noted at a higher frequency than other categorical items.

Later accounts provide evidence of an increasing ability to experience things “as they are” and to neither suppress nor remain fixated on emotions as they arise. “I can feel myself getting agitated and plant my feet firmly on the floor so I can stay connected and not get carried away by the emotions arising” (DRM, 04-05-2017), I describe in recalling one interaction.

References to space between experience and response increase in my recordings, such as:

“Recognizing my own and the teacher’s need for participation, I am able to step back and witness the emotion of loneliness that arises from my personal reaction to being in the dark about the events as they unfolded. It is mixed with the frustration and irritation experienced in relation to the teachers’ distress. Moving beyond these initial reactive emotions and judgments, a moment of mindful breathing allows me to abandon my

Table 7

Coded Reflective Journal Entry, 01-05-2017

Journal Text	Codes
7 a.m. message from (an administrator) begins the day with confusion and irritation ¹ – “We will all meet at 8:15. Time works for (others involved).” - <i>Um, what??</i> First, I have no idea what this meeting is about, ² second, I already have a standing classroom team meeting on my schedule at 8:15. ³	¹ EMO-ANG irritation, stress ² EMO-LON isolated, left out
I scan the trail of messages that are attached to the bottom of this early morning email and discover there has been an ongoing conversation regarding the scheduling of this meeting that I have not been a part of. So much bubbles up to the surface - I’m aggravated by this last minute notice, ⁴ by the lack of consideration for my time and my responsibilities ⁵ – clearly how I spend my time and whatever meetings I may already have scheduled are unimportant and insignificant. ⁶	³ EMO-FEAR; CON-DEM distress, fear of judgment; multiple demands ⁴ EMO-ANG aggravation ⁵ EMO-LON lack of consideration ⁶ SUB-ATT judgment
Never mind that it is the first week back to school after a long break, and I have much to catch up on with the individual classroom teams in preparation for the busy month ahead. ⁷ Not only do I now have to reach out to the classroom team and with such short notice cancel our meeting, which I hate having to do, ⁸ I will also have to somehow magically find some other free time in my jam packed schedule to accomplish the planned conversations with the team. ⁹	⁷ OBJ-CONT task-accomplishment ⁸ EMO-SHM apologetic ⁹ EMO-ANG resentful
I respond with brevity, hoping my irritation is masked ¹⁰ but needing to make the point that I do, in fact, have a scheduled meeting already – as if that shouldn’t already be known, given I provide everyone with a copy of my meetings schedule at the beginning of the year. ¹¹ All one would need to do is to consult this to see that MY TIME IS NEVER	¹⁰ TAC-COMP stress management ¹¹ TAC-BAL overworked

OPEN!!! There isn't a morning or lunch time when I don't have a meeting scheduled, can't you see? No one seems to understand how insanely busy I am, or have any consideration for how limited my time is. ¹² Is it even worth mentioning? ¹³	¹² VAL-EMP consideration ¹³ CON-AV avoiding confrontation
I offer a response that indicates I'll have to shift things around in order to make myself available, ¹⁴ and that the meeting I already had planned was not insignificant or unimportant. ¹⁵ What do I get back? - "As you saw the parents are only available tomorrow at 8:15." – <i>Right</i> . Because the parents are the only people who deserve consideration. ¹⁶	¹⁴ TAC-CA surfacing issues ¹⁵ VAL-EMP consideration ¹⁶ CON-PRI conflicting priorities

Table 8

Quantities of Dramaturgical Coding Categories, Reflective Journal 01-05-2017

Objectives (1)	Conflicts (3)	Tactics (3)	Values (1)	Emotions (7)	Subtext (1)
OBJ-CONT task- accomplishment	CON-DEM multiple demands	TAC- COMP stress management	VAL-EMP consideration	EMO-ANG irritation, stress	SUB- ATT judgment
	CON-AV avoiding confrontation	TAC-BAL overworked		EMO-LON isolated, left out	
	CON-PRI conflicting priorities	TAC-CA surfacing issues		EMO-FEAR distress, fear of judgment	
				EMO-ANG aggravation EMO-LON lack of consideration EMO-SHM apologetic EMO-ANG resentful	

assumptions and approach the situation with curiosity rather than anger” (In process memo, DRM 03-24-2017).

Transcending the self. Later accounts also differ from early accounts in the increased references to others. Less concerned with the expression of my own experience, the contents of the written record from the late Winter through Spring are more heavily based on the experience of others – imagining their intentions, emotions and sensations and relating to these. Concern and compassion for others are expressed with increasing regularity over time, as are references to actions in support of others.

“I can sense my colleague’s stress. It surrounds her like an aura. She expresses feeling challenged by the lack of respect shown throughout this day for our time, for our work, for the space of the office that is supposed to be ours and allow us somewhere to focus on what we need to do.

I think of something that has often occurred to me over the years in this position – that the leader’s humanity is so often forgotten or overlooked. I wish I could relieve some of what she is experiencing emotionally in this moment, but I don’t know how.” (DRM, 04-05-2017).

A side-by-side display of an entry from the early Winter and an entry from the late Spring is offered in Table 9 as an illustration of how the content of reflection seems to change from primarily self-referential to more other-focused. In the selection from the DRM Entry in January, self-referential emotions are present, with feelings of guilt, worry, and reluctance brought about by an anticipation of judgment from others. The selection from the DRM Entry in April, however, presents strong feelings of compassion and connection, in relating my experience to that of another. Though my emotions are present in this conversation, my attention

Table 9

Comparison of Entry Content

DRM Entry 02-25-17	Codes	DRM Entry 04-05-17	Codes
<p>Episode 4: Change of Plan, 11:30 – 12:05</p> <p>I have to send an email to the teachers letting everyone know what the piles of books in the library are for.¹ I've seen people suspiciously eyeing them as they are getting unpacked and piled up on top of the shelf. I start drafting the email and say to my colleague nearby, "Ugh, I don't want to send this."² They are all going to hate me.³ No one wants homework."⁴ In my mind I'm trying to think of how I can present the reality of the situation and somehow buffer the disappointment and resentment that is going to be coming my way after this announcement.⁵ I had good intentions,⁶ and teachers were passionate about the ideas shared (for their professional learning groups),⁷ but I failed to consider how this was all going to happen.⁸ There's no time set aside for people to get together and discuss.⁹ If we were to move forward with these groups without offering the support of dedicated</p>	<p>¹ OBJ-CONT task accomplishment</p> <p>² OBJ-COMP fear of judgment</p> <p>³ EMO-FEAR; EMO-SD worried, reluctant</p> <p>⁴ SUB-ATT</p> <p>⁵ EMO-SD; EMO-SHM discouraged, guilty</p> <p>⁶ OBJ-ACH strategic direction</p> <p>⁷ TAC-COL inviting participation</p> <p>⁸ CON-EXP lack of experience</p> <p>⁹ CON-STR absent structures</p>	<p>Episode 2: Thinking About the Transition, 9:30-10:00</p> <p>In conversation with the Co-Directors To Be who will be splitting my position next year, thinking aloud together¹ about the current reality, and the constant pull on time and attention that is happening² as the transition begins. This is proving to be challenging for one³ however, as (person) is currently a classroom teacher and still attempting to carry out all the responsibilities associated with that role. (Person's) reflections on the struggle to balance this state of "in-between" teacher and administrator are so connected to my own experience.⁴ I feel that ache of realization that neither role is being carried out as effectively as it could be when one is stuck in the middle – I know it well.⁵ I sympathize with the position (person) is in.⁶ Not wanting to let the teaching team down, but at the same time, wanting to establish relationships with</p>	<p>¹ TAC-COL shared leadership</p> <p>² CON-PRI, CON-DEM Conflicting priorities, multiple demands</p> <p>³ OBJ-REL compassion</p> <p>⁴ EMO-LV compassionate</p> <p>⁵ EMO-SD, EMO-SAD inadequate, overwhelmed</p> <p>⁶ EMO-LV compassionate</p> <p>⁷ CON-DEM, VAL-CONT multiple demands, competence</p>

time in the school day for people to meet, they would hate me for that, too. ¹⁰ I can't win.	¹⁰ OBJ-COMP fear of judgment	the soon to be team. ⁷ Not wanting to take on too much and risk dropping a ball (there are so many in the air), ⁸ but at the same time, eager to face new challenges and dive into new experiences. ⁹	⁸ CON-VUL ⁹ VAL-CONT challenge
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is more focused on the other person, and the content reflective of thought about how the other person is feeling rather than focused on how I am feeling. The detachment of self and perception that is increasingly noted over time, is also evident in this meta-analysis prompted by the Ecological Momentary Assessment process:

“Awareness of my own interpretations of others’ behavior seems to be increasing. I tend to see things more often as ‘it feels as though’ or ‘I’m reading this to mean’ rather than ‘It is’ – I’m more often identifying that my thought is simply my interpretation and not a definite reality. I’m more conscious that my interpretation is subject to change with any new information, and that what I determine from my experience isn’t necessarily how others will interpret the same experience” (EMA, 05-01-2017). The practice of listening to the self, acknowledging what is underlying the actions or expressions, is in the later months of the school year consciously applied toward a more developed practice of listening and attuning to the other, as described here:

“I find myself frequently drawing upon my learning from the Mindful Communication course I completed in the Fall, using some of these practices in service to teachers. I meet with an angry and stressed (teacher) and attempt to offer questions or statements that serve to pull (the teacher) out of (the teacher’s) own positioning to gain some perspective of (the other)’s point of view. I acknowledge the difficulty in understanding

(the other)'s thought process, and recognize (the teacher)'s strong sense of integrity and fairness. What are you hoping to gain from your conversation? I ask. What could (the other) say that would provide you with what you need? What do you suppose (the other) is hoping to achieve? (DRM, Episode 5: How Do I Say . . ., 05-02-2017).

In addition to evidence of attuning to individuals, there is also evidence in the account of attuning to the general temperature of the faculty, and taking steps to raise people's spirits and energy when there is a recognized need. An email at an extremely busy time in the Spring addresses the "drooping shoulders and glazed expressions" that are calling out for "some love, care and attention" and I volunteer to cover for anyone needing a little extra time out of the classroom (Email: A little pick me up, 04-21-2017). Words of gratitude and affirmation appear more frequently in messages, and gestures of kindness are offered to the faculty as a whole in recognition of their consistent efforts.

From blaming to accepting responsibility. A further trend noted in the data is a shift from patterns of thought and emotion of blaming others or the current systems, to acceptance of my own responsibility for my reactions. A realization is evident that many issues are created not by others or by the systems, but by my reactions to others or the systems. Early entries illustrate feelings of disempowerment and isolation, and a crying out for recognition. There is a strong message held within the words indicating a need to be seen and to be understood. Others' actions are assumed to imply a negative judgment of my work, with attributions such as "insignificant" and "unimportant" applied to the responsibilities of my role that are seemingly unnoticed by others (Reflective Journal, 01-05-2017).

An inability to communicate clearly also characterizes the early written record of experience, with an attitude of pushing against the system rather than working within the system. Judgments of others are apparent in these early entries, as in this excerpt:

As expected, her immediate response is to defend and justify these actions. She is dismissing rather than listening. I find myself repeating the same statement in as many different ways as I can think of, hoping the idea will somehow land, but have no luck. As I listen to the justifications, I find myself wondering if there is some element of self-deception here – a private, internal recognition on her part that these practices are unjust and unfair, but an unwillingness to accept that this could be the case, for the judgment she would then be placing upon herself. Therefore, here we are with this long list of reasons that don't actually explain away the problem but maybe somehow make her feel better about it?! Internally, I'm increasingly aggravated, but externally I just nod and smile. I'm not getting anywhere with this today, I can see, so best to simply escape this conversation as soon as possible (Reflective Journal, 01-13-2017).

Judgments, blame and attributions appear with regularity in accounts of experience from January and February (coded as Subtext), then steadily reduce over time. Absent from written records of experience from later months in the school year, judgments, blame and attributions are replaced with more constructive approaches to problem-solving, and I express an increased openness to other perspectives:

I must admit, I can't begin to imagine what it must feel like sitting in (an administrator)'s chair. I am always looking through the lens of the teacher, and have been allowed to maintain this narrow view while she has had to maintain the big picture. I'm sure there is so much I am unaware of, in terms of the challenges and pressures she is operating under.

As frustrating as it is to have my ideas responded to with “that’s not going to be possible,” I must be honest about having neither the knowledge nor the responsibility for managing the school budget. I have the luxury of dreaming up ideas with no thought about the financial impact and the bottom line (Reflective Journal, 05-15-2017).

Examining the patterns in the appearance of codes across time once again, Objectives and Tactics begin to take precedence over Emotions, evident in the coding of an email presented in Table 10. It is important to note here, as well, the appearance of the positive emotion of optimism or hope. Whereas in early recordings of experience the emotions noted tended to be overwhelmingly negative, in the later recordings there is more balance to the emotional experience, with a more even representation of positive and negative emotions.

Table 10

Quantities of Dramaturgical Coding Categories, Email: An Idea, 04-29-2017

Objectives (5)	Conflicts (2)	Tactics (3)	Values (1)	Emotions (2)	Subtext (0)
OBJ-DEV supporting learning	CON-DEM multiple demands	TAC-BAL overworked	VAL-BEL cooperation	EMO-EX unfocused	
OBJ-CONT results driven	CON-SYS lacking systems	TAC-COL shared leadership		EMO-OP hopeful	
OBJ-ACH strategic direction		TAC-CA speaking directly			
OBJ-DEV advocating for others					
OBJ-SA enhancing long-term effectiveness of the system					

This shift from a focus on emotion to a focus on objectives and tactics that occurs over the six-month period can be seen in the record of experience as a shift from internal to external. At first overwhelmed by my own emotion and experience, the initial impact of my mindfulness practice was directed at my internal states, allowing me to gain awareness and insight into my own ways of being, feeling, and doing. The reflection on and compassion toward my own experience later allowed me to transfer awareness and attention to those around me.

Spontaneous, unsolicited messages and statements of affirmation from my colleagues highlighted some of the visible aspects of my mindfulness practice seeping into my practice of leadership:

“I feel supported – and a lot calmer – when you are nearby!”

“I really appreciate your open door policy and open arms at difficult and challenging times!”

“There’s an element of your own presence and self-awareness that comes clearly through your presentation of moments of teaching and learning.”

“I love that I keep finding you at meditation moments (referring to the meditation reminders on my phone, which emitted a loud chiming sound), which results in having to take a moment myself and find stillness in my increasingly active and cluttered brain!

We all need people to challenge and motivate us. I know I will not become complacent in my practice so long as I have strong, honest, and inspiring people like you holding me accountable to my own values.”

In addition to the collection of self-observations and internal perspectives on my own thoughts, emotions and behaviors, it was important to me to gather external perspectives, such as these, that might confirm or reject my own internal view. Rather than depend upon these

assessments being shared spontaneously, as the above statements were, I enlisted the services of an outside evaluator to conduct a formalized 360° leadership assessment. Before embarking upon an examination of this assessment, however, it is possible to offer the second key finding, from the perspective of the Researcher:

Finding 2. *The understanding of the self, encouraged by mindfulness practice, assisted in the development of my internal capacities, which in turn, promoted the continual evolution of my external capacities.*

The effects of increasing attention regulation and emotion regulation developed through mindfulness meditation are first experienced and reported as internal elements. Decreasing rumination, decreasing defensiveness, decreasing evaluative tendencies or judgments, and decreasing emotional reactions are all indicated as felt and experienced from within prior to any record of any visible, external expressions of these capacities. First gaining clarity on internal thoughts and emotions, self-awareness appeared to be the foundation for the development of self-regulation and self-transcendence.

Aligning with this pattern of movement from the inside, out, the section that follows will take a perspective that is further removed from the perspective of The Leader, stepping further outside experience to examine how I am perceived from an external view. In order to examine the data elicited from The Leadership Circle Profile™, the voice of the Researcher will transition to the voice of the Researcher-Leader, who is both participant and observer.

The Researcher-Leader

Collected via anonymous survey in the final weeks of the school year, The Leadership Circle Profile™ is presented in a comprehensive circular graph measuring both leadership competencies and internal assumptions (Appendix K offers a blank version of the circle diagram

and Appendix L provides an optimal version of the completed diagram). The circle is laid out as a four-quadrant grid. The top half measures Creative competencies. The bottom half measures Reactive internal assumptions. The right half measures Task-oriented competencies and assumptions. The left half measures the nature of Relationships.

Dimensions opposite tend to be opposing, therefore, stronger scores in the bottom half are related to lower scores in the top half. The bold black line represents my assessment of myself on each of the competencies and internal assumptions, while the shaded area represents the average of my colleagues' assessments of these competencies and perceived internal assumptions. The inner circle displays eight dimensions. Each of these dimensions represents a summary score for the related competencies or internal assumptions in the outer circle.

The interaction between the quadrants is summarized in the four scales along the outer edges of the circle. The scales display a percentile score in comparison to other leaders who have used this survey. The following analysis of the scores on each dimension is drawn from my individual Leadership Circle Profile™ Report (see Appendix M), The Leadership Circle Profile™ Interpretation Manual, and a 90-minute conversation with the evaluator conducting the assessment.

As a person relatively new to leadership and still struggling to integrate the concept of Leader into my own identity, the low numeric scores on many of the leadership competencies and internal assumptions, indicating areas of weakness, are not surprising to see. When compared to other leaders in other contexts, both based on my currently limited experience as well as the position of in-between that my specific role mandates, I would expect to be less skilled in or less visibly engaged in some of these areas. What was most relevant to me, for the

purposes of this study, was to examine how closely aligned my assessment of myself was with the assessment my colleagues offered.

Creative competencies. My assessment of myself and my colleagues' assessment of me were relatively similar on most competencies, reflected in the top half of the circle as pictured in Figure 4, indicating that how I experience myself from within and how I believe I am projecting myself to the outside world, are fairly consistent with how I am recognized by those in the outside world.

In general, the assessment I provided on myself offered a less positive view than the assessment others reported, which again, was not surprising to see. I am my own worst critic. Slight differences can be seen in a few areas. For example, my colleagues rated me slightly higher in the competencies of Caring Connection, Fosters Team Play, Selfless Leader, Strategic Focus and Purposeful & Visionary. My self-assessment and my colleagues' assessment in each of these areas, however, were within the same overall range (high, medium or low). Major differences in scores are visible in the competencies of Composure, an area I rated myself higher than my colleagues reported, and Integrity, an area I rated myself lower than my colleagues reported, with these differences crossing the boundary line between the overall ranges. For example, the rating I offered myself for Composure was in the high range (just above the 66th percentile), while the rating my colleagues provided on this competency were only in the medium range (between the 33rd and 66th percentiles).

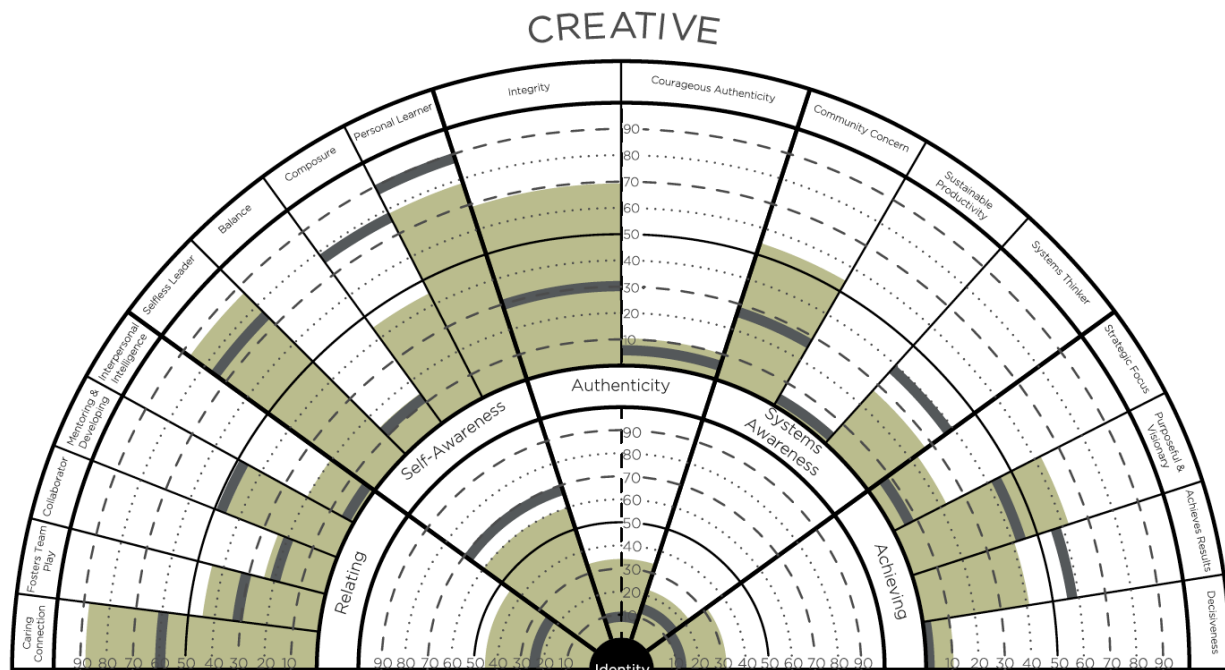


Figure 4. Creative competencies – Alyssa Fraser. Provided by the Leadership Circle Profile™. Creative Leadership Competencies measure key behaviors and internal assumptions leading to high fulfillment and high achievement. Caring Connection measures the ability to form caring relationships. Fosters Team Play measures the ability to foster teamwork. Collaborator measures the ability to engage others in resolving conflict situations and develop synergy. Mentoring & Developing measures the ability to help people grow personally and professionally. Interpersonal Intelligence measures the ability to engage in conflict, and manage own and others' feelings. Selfless Leader measures the drive to serve the common good. Balance measures the ability to maintain balance between work and leisure. Composure measures the ability to maintain calm and focus in the midst of conflict. Personal Learner measures the demonstration of interest in learning and personal growth. Integrity measures adherence to espoused values and principles. Courageous Authenticity measures the willingness to deal openly with issues. Community Concern measures the extent to which a service orientation is visible. Sustainable Productivity measures the ability to enhance the long term effectiveness of the organization. Systems Thinker measures the ability to think and act from a whole system perspective. Strategic Focus measures the ability to think strategically. Purposeful & Visionary measures the ability to clearly communicate a purpose and vision. Achieves Results measures the extent to which goal-directed behaviors and high performance are visible. Decisiveness measures an ability to make efficient and timely decisions.

Reactive styles. More differences are apparent in the bottom portion of the circle, pictured in Figure 5, which measures reactive behaviors and internal assumptions. These reactive leadership styles limit effectiveness and authentic expression, and as stated previously, high scores on these dimensions tend to result in lower scores on the Creative Competencies, as these tend to reflect opposing behavioral patterns and internal assumptions. For example, a need for approval and acceptance, which would result in high scores in Complying, tends to reduce behaviors such as decisiveness and courage, which would lead to low scores in Achieving.

My colleagues and I agreed on ratings for Ambition (both very low), Critical (again, both very low), and Conservative (both extremely low). There were slight differences in ratings for Distance and Belonging, but each of these within the same overall range. The major differences are in the areas Perfect, Driven, Autocratic, Arrogance, Passive, and Pleasing. I rated myself higher than my colleagues in Perfect, Autocratic and Arrogance. Concurrently, my colleagues observed me to be more Passive and Pleasing than I believe myself to be, as indicated by the differences in the self- and other-ratings in these areas.

Dimensions. On the Leadership Circle Profile™, the competencies and internal assumptions along the outer circle are combined to create an inner circle of eight dimensions which outline behaviors and orientations critical to leadership, illustrated in Figure 6. A summary score for the combined competencies and internal assumptions that compose the dimension is indicated by the bold line (self-assessment) and shaded area (others' assessment). In addition to analyzing how well my self-assessment aligns with the assessment my colleagues have provided, it is important to consider what the summary scores indicate about my leadership behavior and how this connects to the experience of leadership I have reported.

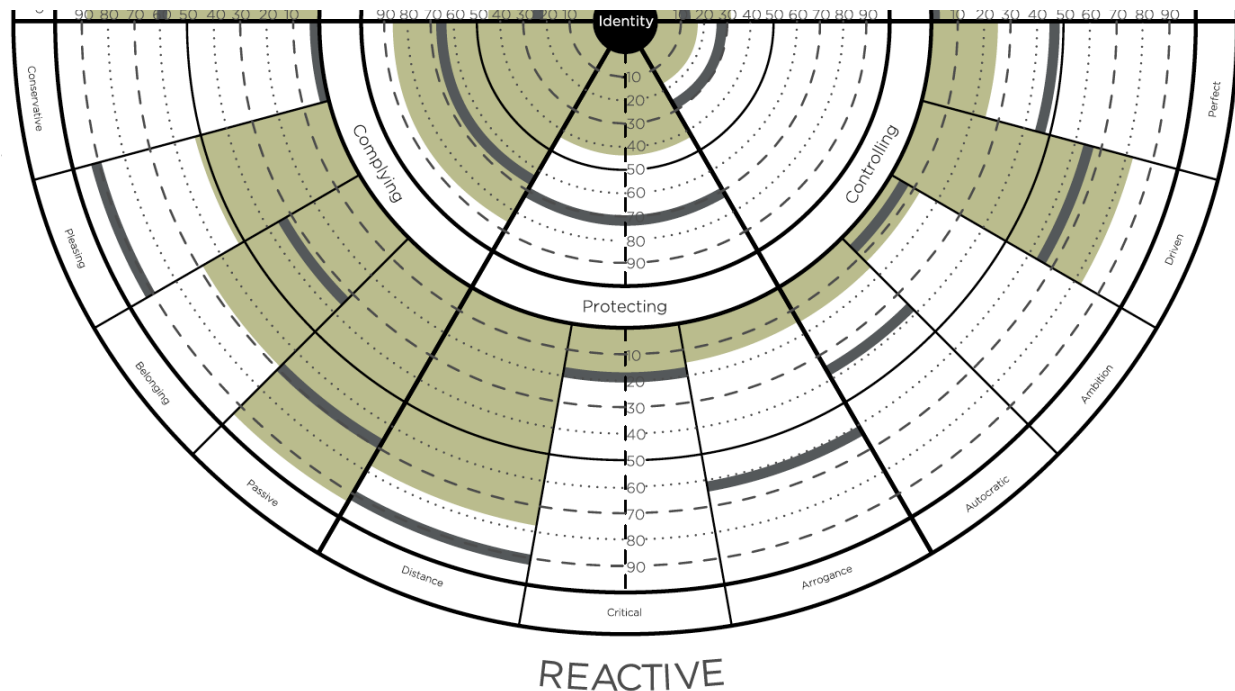


Figure 5. Reactive Styles – Alyssa Fraser. Provided by The Leadership Circle Profile™. Reactive Leadership Styles measure the behaviors and inner assumptions that limit effectiveness. Perfect measures the need to perform to extremely high standards. Driven measures the extent to which behaviors reflect working excessively hard. Ambition measures the need to win or achieve. Autocratic measures a tendency to be aggressive or controlling. Arrogance measures the tendency to project egotistical, superior behavior. Critical is the tendency to take a critical or cynical attitude. Distance measures the tendency to remain aloof or emotionally distant. Conservative measures the tendency to live with prescribed rules. Pleasing measures the need to seek others' support or approval. Belonging measures the need to meet the expectations of others. Passive measures a tendency to give power away to others.

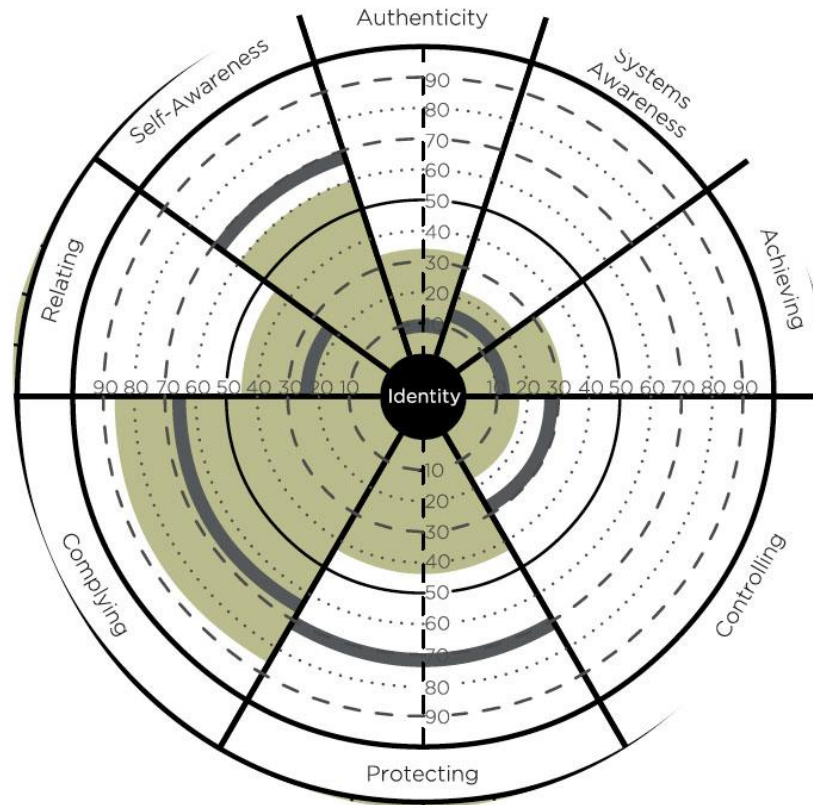


Figure 6. Inner Circle Dimensions – Alyssa Fraser. Provided by The Leadership Circle Profile™. The inner circle displays eight dimensions, each of which is a summary score for the related competencies and inner assumptions on the outer circle. Relating is composed of Caring Connection, Fosters Team Play, Collaborator, Mentoring & Developing, and Interpersonal Intelligence. Relating measures the capability to bring out the best in others. Self-Awareness is composed of Selfless Leader, Balance, Composure, and Personal Learner and measures the degree to which self-awareness is outwardly expressed. Authenticity is composed of Integrity and Courageous Authenticity and measures the capability to relate in a manner that is authentic, courageous, and high in integrity. Systems Awareness is composed of Community Concern, Sustainable Productivity, and Systems Thinker and measures the degree to which awareness is focused on improving the whole system. Achieving is composed of Strategic Focus, Purposeful & Visionary, Achieves Results, and Decisiveness. Achieving measures the extent to which visionary, authentic and high achievement leadership is offered. Controlling is composed of Perfect, Driven, Ambition, and Autocratic, and measures the extent to which self-worth is established through personal achievement. Protecting is composed of Arrogance, Critical, and Distance, and measures the extent to which self-worth is established by protecting the self by remaining distant, hidden or superior. Complying is composed of Conservative, Pleasing, Belonging, and Passive and measures the extent to which self-worth is established by meeting the expectations of others and gaining others' approval.

Relating. The scores in this dimension indicate that people feel supported in my presence and feel accepted for who they are. They feel genuinely cared about and recognize empathy and compassion in my behaviors (Caring Connection). While teachers recognize my ability to listen to and value other perspectives (an average rating of 39% on items addressing Collaborator), other administrators report a very different sense of this capacity (an average rating of 4% on these same items). Behaviors such as being difficult to influence, negotiating with self-interest, or, alternatively, not taking a position, are suggested by this low rating. Mentoring & Developing, all agree, are visible in my leadership in behaviors such as helping people learn and improve, and empowering others.

Interpersonal Intelligence is an area of particular surprise. If asked in conversation about my interpersonal skills, I would likely report confidence in my ability to listen to and attune with others. On this assessment, however, my self-rating in this category is extremely low. I rated myself lower than my administrative peers, whose scores were also at the lower end, and much lower than the teachers, whose scores were in the medium range for this particular set of items. Examining the questions related to this competency, it is evident that these are primarily aimed at conflict and problem situations:

I take responsibility for my part of relationship problems.

In a conflict, I accurately restate the opinions of others.

I directly address issues that get in the way of team performance.

I display a high degree of skill in resolving conflict. (LCP Report, p. 5)

Given the particular focus of these statements, I would surmise my tendency to avoid conflict and withdraw from confrontation has impacted all of the scores in this area, especially my own. Avoiding conflict and confrontation are recognized behaviors appearing in the coding

of the data. Across the record of experience, the code for the particular conflict or obstacle (CON-AV) appears multiple times across the data set and in a variety of situations and interactions. The coded selection that follows in Table 11 is one of many that reflect this tendency to avoid confronting issues directly.

Balancing the tendency to avoid conflict is the objective of relating. This is true across the data set whenever the avoiding conflict (CON-AV) code has been applied, an appearance of either the relating objective (OBJ-REL) or emotion of compassion (EMO-LV) can also be seen. Analyzing these patterns, there appears to be strong evidence that the avoidance of conflict is directly related to the desire to support and connect with others.

Table 11

Coded Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) entry, 05-16-2017

EMA, 12:35 p.m. 05-16-2017	Codes
<p>Took a walk at lunchtime with (teacher), at (teacher's) request. Teaching partner had already been in to talk with me this morning about the tension between them and ongoing frustration over (teacher's) lack of presence and low performance. I am supposed to address this with (teacher).¹</p> <p>Have you had one or more experiences in the last 30 minutes in which mindfulness practice has affected:</p> <p>your knowledge of yourself as a leader? conscious of thoughts in my mind about what I am supposed to be saying that is not being said – internal judgment²</p> <p>your openness to others and how you respond to behavior of others?</p>	<p>¹ OBJ-COMP “supposed to” – meeting expectation</p> <p>² CON-AV, EMO-SHM avoiding confrontation, guilty</p>

listening to what (teacher) is sharing as we walk, it is obvious that this is neither the time nor space for (teacher) to take in any form of feedback or criticism. There is an emotional, personal issue that I must be open to hearing and processing, if I am going to be able to support (teacher).³

³ OBJ-REL, TAC-II
compassion, giving emotional support

the way you act and make decisions as a leader?

compassion for (the teacher I am with) does not diminish the responsibility I feel for (the teacher) who came to me earlier.⁴ I feel torn between the two responsibilities of emotionally supporting (this teacher) and professionally supporting (the other teacher) by providing (this teacher) with some explicit feedback.⁵ I prioritize the well-being of the individual and the relationship, making the provision of feedback secondary and leaving it for a later date when (teacher) is more emotionally available to hear it.⁶

⁴ EMO-LV, VAL-EMP
compassionate, understanding

⁵ CON-PRI
conflicting priorities

⁶ VAL-EMP, VAL-BEL
empathy, being trusted

how you show your emotions to others?

trying to maintain an evenness and respond calmly,⁷ expressing sympathy while listening for what (teacher's) needs are in this moment.⁸

⁷ TAC-COMP
calm

⁸ TAC-II
listening to understand

hiding a sense of relief about having an excuse not to address the issue⁹

⁹ CON-AV

how you communicate what you really think?

so much internal thought is unexpressed, by choice, consciously holding back the planned conversation that I had previously rehearsed and reacting instead to what is happening in the moment.¹⁰

¹⁰ OBJ-REL

in two minds for the entire conversation – the mind that is listening and responding within the present dialogue, and the mind that is criticizing and judging me for not saying what was supposed to be said.¹¹

¹¹ TAC-SA
self-awareness

Ratings: A - 4, R - 4, T - 4

Self-Awareness. Self-awareness is an area of strength, according to this profile, with all items in the higher range except for Balance. According to the scores in Personal Learner, my colleagues recognize my active pursuit of personal and professional development and my belief in life as a continual journey of learning. The competency of Selfless Leader is the highest rated area on the profile, and comments indicate that my behavior demonstrates humility, and self-sacrifice is noted in my actions. Balance, on the other hand, is one of the lower rated areas on the profile, highlighting that others are aware of the lack of time I offer to my personal life, and believe I work too much and too intensely. Composure, interestingly, my administrative peers and I rate significantly higher than the teachers (77% self, 76% administration, 35% teachers).

Authenticity. The dimension of Authenticity reveals a stark contrast between the ratings on the two capacities. Integrity, others rated relatively high (69%), while I rated myself fairly low (30%). The other piece of this dimension, Courageous Authenticity, addresses the ability to express feelings honestly, to bring up issues in real-time and manage conflicts directly. Low scores in this capacity indicate a value of equilibrium or keeping the peace over conflict, and this agrees with the evidence in the written accounts of experience, as discussed previously when addressing this issue in the dimension of Relating.

Though there was evidence offered in the written account of experience of an increasing ability to courageously surface issues and speak directly, these small successes were primarily within interactions among the administrative team, and on the whole, teachers would not have been witness to these moments. Further, amidst these small successes was evidence of the continued tendency to hide feelings, as in this example:

First day back after the break and I was purposefully avoiding interactions with (particular people). When I reached out this morning over email to share the news (of my

sister's plans to move), it wasn't because I wouldn't have time to tell people face-to-face, let's be honest. It was in fear that if I did tell people face-to-face they would be able to see it all over me and read everything that I was truly feeling as soon as I opened my mouth. I've always been a terrible liar, my mom always says. Can't hide anything, my eyes give it all away. This isn't quite lying, I suppose, but hiding behind an email is definitely a sign I'm guilty of something (Reflective Journal, 01-03-2017).

An EMA entry from February also directly addresses the hiding of emotions, in response to the prompt, "how you show your emotions to others," revealing the following thoughts:

I feel like I'm keeping everything inside, not revealing too much. I wonder if this is true from (the other person's) perspective. Can (person) tell, even though I'm not trying to show it? I've never been all that good at hiding my emotions. Mindfulness techniques have helped me to stay grounded, particularly in moments of anger and frustration, and to feel as though I am managing these feelings with greater ease and less outward visibility (EMA, 9:00 a.m., 02-01-2017).

The tendency to hold back from expressing feelings honestly and addressing issues directly is visible in the written account of experience, therefore it is not surprising that this has been recognized by others as an outward area of weakness.

Systems Awareness. Overall, one of the lowest rated dimensions, Systems Awareness addresses the focus on the whole system and the interests of the organization. The low score here across all raters indicates a narrow focus, and a micro rather than macro view of the organization. The higher rating (60%) by teachers in the capacity Community Concern indicates an understanding that I am committed to making a positive contribution to society, which may simply be a reflection of being in the field of work of education, or may address particular

actions within my leadership. Lower ratings in the Systems Thinker capacity (all raters around 30%), I would venture to guess, point to both my lack of experience in leadership and the particular leadership position I hold. Each of these limits the scope of view with which I consider organizational needs and issues, admittedly looking from the teacher perspective rather than from a whole systems perspective, as is communicated in the Leader vignette. It is also a reflection of the limited access to and responsibility for other aspects of the organization that I hold, existing in the in-between position of Educational Director.

The most telling piece in this dimension is Sustainable Productivity, which is rated extremely low across all raters (3% self, 2% administration, 13% teachers). Items in this category include:

I balance bottom line results with other organizational goals.

I allocate resources appropriately so as not to use people up.

I balance short-term results with long-term organizational health.

Corroborating the low rating on the dimension of Systems Awareness is evidence drawn from the coding of the data. All of the codes in the Objectives category were applied at least once across the data set, except for Systems Awareness. This code never being used offers support for the absence of this kind of thinking in any of my recorded thoughts and reflections.

Achieving. The four capacities within the Achieving dimension are mixed when it comes to the ratings. The areas of Purposeful & Visionary and Achieves Results are both rated in the medium range, while Strategic Focus and Decisiveness are in the low range. The higher ratings on capacities in this dimension illustrate others' assessment of my ability to inspire and communicate vision, as well as invite others to take part in developing the vision. Also recognized here is the seeking of continuous improvement and the ability to get the job done.

Strategic Focus, once again, addresses items such as “integration of all parts of the system” and a “grasp on market place dynamics,” the lower scores reflective of the reality that neither of these are expectations of my role nor have been part of my leadership experience as yet.

Decisiveness is the capacity for which I gave myself the lowest rating on the profile (scoring at just 1%). This, I interpret as a reflection of the time I believe must be dedicated to making decisions, and the commitment to include multiple voices and perspectives. The items in this area refer to “efficient” and “timely” decisions, and in an effort to gather everyone’s input, I would not characterize my decision making actions with these adjectives. For example, excerpts from an email illustrate efforts to slow down decision-making to provide space for more information gathering and sensitivity to multiple perspectives:

I thought a lot about this since our last meeting when the plan was proposed that grade levels next week become a time for admin to present a response to some of the issues that have been raised. After much reflection and continued conversation with teachers this week, I’m not sure that this is the right time for the approach that has been discussed . . .

My major concern is that we are jumping into reacting and problem solving prematurely, before spending time really establishing understanding and trust and making sure we are on the same page. From my conversations with teachers this week, I don’t have the sense that they feel administration full understands them or are actually interested in their side of things, and that more work needs to be done in order to establish understanding and clarity about the objectives/needs/concerns on the table . . .

I would propose using next week’s grade level meetings to continue listening, keeping the attention on the teachers and simply checking for understanding. Offer the

space to hear and listen before we respond and add something new, offer reflection of what we're understanding, clarifying what their concerns are and really making sure we are on the same page about that (Email: Brief (I promise) Meeting, 03-09-2017).

Controlling. The lower scores in the Controlling dimension reflect an absence of authoritative or aggressive behavior, indicating that the need to win or get my own way is not generally present in my professional interactions. The only high score in this dimension is in Driven, which refers again to the work-life imbalance and the “workaholic” nature that has been a noted presence in my professional efforts, also evident in the written record of experience.

Protecting. The scores in this dimension measure behaviors such as withdrawal and maintaining distance in relationships. These behaviors hint at a lack of confidence or self-doubt. While colleagues identified a lack of Arrogance (15%) and a lack of being Critical (18%) in my behavior, emotional Distance was scored quite high (78%). Examining the different groups of raters separately, the highest score in this capacity resulted from the assessment from other administrators, at 96%. Teachers, however, rated this capacity as less present, but still fairly noticeable, at 63%. I, myself, was more in agreement with the administrative team, self-scoring this capacity at 91%.

Specific actions or tendencies contributing to a high score in distancing are maintaining strictly professional relationships, remaining guarded, hesitating to make decisions, avoiding conflict situations, and feeling a lack of efficacy. The high scores in this capacity, in a general sense, indicate an assertion that I am “hard to get to know.” Specific evidence corroborating this is available in the written record of experience. Early in the school year, when acknowledging and praising efforts made by a teacher to organize a few social events outside of school, I revealed some of my reasons for withdrawing from these types of events in an email:

Just wanted to say I'm so happy to see some social events happening here and appreciate all the effort (and creativity) going into the organizations and invites. I didn't want my absence to be interpreted as a lack of desire to be part of it all - I would love to! I just also recognize the need for teachers to have their own time and an outlet to vent as needed, and my presence might prohibit that from happening (Email: enjoy your piña coladas, 09-30-2017).

Even the events considered social on the school calendar still demand a certain "work mode" mentality – interacting with parents, making sure to get around to say hello to everyone and certain people especially, to maintain those delicate relationships – I didn't ever experience the space to truly let my professional guard down and let my true self be seen, as evidenced in this anecdote:

It's so nice to see you with a drink in your hand and relaxing!" (a teacher) remarks, and it occurs to me that this hasn't been typical of me in this setting, to engage with my colleagues outside of work. Even the events considered social on the school calendar still demand a certain "work mode" mentality – interacting with parents, making sure to get around to say hello to everyone and certain people especially, to maintain those delicate relationships – I didn't ever experience the space to truly let my professional guard down and let my true self be seen. This particular event is my least favorite, and the only reason I happen to have a drink in my hand at the moment is because I was caught in a conversation with a parent by the bar and felt awkward not ordering a drink when (the parent) was doing so (Reflective Journal, 04-26-2017).

There is a consciously recognized intention to distance self as leader from others that is visible in the written account of experience, often connected to an assumption that the role demands a

certain distance. “There’s a fine line I have to walk between friendship and leadership. If I get too close, and then there’s some issue that needs to be addressed, how would I be able to step back from friend and act with authority?” (Reflective Journal, 05-19-2017).

Complying. The high scores in this dimension reflect a relinquishing of power or lack of control, or a tendency for going along to get along. Behaviors seeking approval or acceptance, worrying about others’ judgment, or being non-assertive and passive can contribute to a high rating in this area. Extremely low scores in the Conservative area indicate that creative self-expression is fully present in my actions, and others recognize my ability to think beyond conventional ways of doing things. Scores in the middle range for Belonging and Pleasing reflect an identified need to seek others’ support and approval, or to be overly generous. Being sensitive to criticism or disapproval, avoiding conflict and confrontation, and looking to supervisors for direction are all behaviors which contribute to higher ratings in these areas.

Passive, a quality which others assessed as more present in my leadership than I self-identified, is another area strongly influenced by avoidance of conflict and confrontation. Behaviors such as having issues but being unwilling to discuss them directly, or holding on to anger or only letting it out in passive-aggressive ways contribute to high scores in this section of the profile. Interestingly, the description of Passive provided in the Profile Interpretation Guide includes the phrase, “you lack the power to create the future you want,” which very accurately describes the feelings communicated in the data and expressed in the Leader vignette, before I settled on the realization that the experiences of conflicting priorities and differing values were significant enough to prompt my resignation.

Summary measures. Four scales along the outer edges of the profile circle provide visual representation of the degree of balance between the dimensions measured. The mid-range

scores on the Reactive-Creative scale indicate that my behaviors and internal assumptions place me between the orientations of “playing to win” and “trying not to lose” (Wilson & Wilson, 2004 cited in R. J. Anderson & Adams, 2016) and reflect the possibility that my external leadership actions are more determined by school culture and external expectations than by my own internal values and beliefs. The Relationship-Task Balance scale reflects a possible overemphasis on relationships at the expense of achieving results, given the higher scores in Relating and lower scores in Achieving. The risk indicated by this imbalance is that performance is compromised for the sake of maintaining harmony.

The Leadership Potential Utilization provides an overall comparison between my scores and the scores of other leaders who have taken this assessment. The mid-range score here indicates that my strengths and weaknesses are fairly balanced at this point, however, my true potential is not being expressed. Leadership Effectiveness provides a perceived level of overall effectiveness as a leader, based on my self-scores and the scores my colleagues provided. The low scores point to the reactive tendencies that were highlighted on the circle profile, and suggest that improvements are needed for effective leadership to be fully visible.

Possible explanations offered for lower scores on these measures are:

It could mean you are in a job that does not express who you are.

It could mean you are new in a job and have a lot to learn.

It could mean that you are in transition (Leadership Circle Profile Interpretation Guide, p. 85).

Direct references to each of these appear in the record of my experience over the last six months.

Taking in all of the data from the Leadership Circle Profile™, overall there is relative agreement between how I see myself and how others perceive me. The areas of strength and

areas of weakness that others identified within my practice of leadership are not surprising, as I recognize these in myself. Strengths noted by others in the comments provided on the assessment are:

the consistency with which respect is shown for both teachers and children

the ability to build strong and trusting relationships with others

being a deeply thoughtful person

seeing the potential in every person and space

modeling the behaviors expected in others

challenging others to think critically and take ownership

being an intense and focused listener

being self-aware and self-reflective and prompting these qualities in others

acting with compassion and humility

being empathetic

demonstrating passion

putting aside own needs/interests for others

making everyone feel heard and appreciated

Colleagues showed an incredible level of agreement when identifying leadership challenges or areas of development. Overwhelmingly, responses indicated what was most lacking in the visible practice of leadership were the behaviors of confronting challenging situations and dealing with conflict directly. Noted in some of the comments was the tendency to encourage others to problem solve independently or to help others “find their own way.” Though recognized as a positive trait in some situations, this tendency is highlighted as a barrier to being viewed as decisive and direct when conflicts arise. One comment illuminated a factor

previously recognized within, stating a need to “work on becoming more comfortable in the role of leader, not just teacher.”

The examination of the data provided by the Leadership Circle Profile™ resulted in a third key finding:

Finding 3. *My internal perceptions of effectiveness were, for the most part, aligned with colleagues’ reported external perceptions, indicating my internal experience was congruent with my external portrayal and enactment of leadership.*

Conclusion

This chapter presented the key findings uncovered by this autoethnophenomenographic study of an educational leader’s attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice. The examination of how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership proceeded through the data provided by my recording of experience over a six-month period, combined with outside perspectives of my leadership effectiveness offered by a formalized 360° leadership assessment. The intention of using primarily my own words was to build the confidence of readers that the reality of the person and situations have been accurately represented.

The primary finding offered by this study is that the practice of mindfulness becomes an embedded part of my way of thinking and being. The shifts happened slowly and subtly, as I cultivated incremental changes in self-awareness and self-regulation and became better able to consciously create space between experience and reaction. Though there are instances in which I made a conscious effort to apply specific techniques learned in mindfulness courses to professional efforts in the school context, for the most part, the integration of mindfulness and leadership is not through a conscious effort, but happens naturally and organically.

The second finding is that the understanding of the self that is encouraged by mindfulness practice assisted in the development of my internal capacities, which in turn, promoted continual adaptation of my external capacities. This inside-out pattern is illustrated in the data, with the record of experience shifting from an internal focus and the communication of the leader's own emotion and experience, to an external focus and the offering of attention to and curiosity toward others' experience.

The third finding is that my internal perceptions of effectiveness were, for the most part, aligned with colleagues' reported external perceptions, indicating my internal experience was congruent with my external portrayal and enactment of leadership. The examination of the data provided by the 360° leadership assessment served to confirm that self-identified areas of strength and areas for growth were mirrored in the strengths and areas for growth recognized by my colleagues.

Repeated here for clarity and for reference in the following discussion of the research questions, are the findings:

Finding 1. *Over time, the practice of mindfulness became an embedded part of my way of thinking and being, and was perceived as organically integrated into the daily practice of leadership.*

Finding 2. *The understanding of the self, encouraged by mindfulness practice, assisted in the development of my internal capacities, which in turn, promoted the continual evolution of my external capacities.*

Finding 3. *My internal perceptions of effectiveness were, for the most part, aligned with colleagues' reported external perceptions, indicating my internal experience was congruent with my external portrayal and enactment of leadership.*

Combining the three voices back into one and returning to the research questions, I can now apply the insights gained from analysis and interpretation of the data. The first question, which sought to determine my perceived connection between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of educational leadership, can be addressed by Findings 1 and 2.

Connections between mindfulness and my ability to meet the demands of my professional role, as evident in the data, include an increased attention toward renewal and replenishment, and an increased ability to respond to issues with less reactivity. Further, increased attunement with others is illustrated in the data, with the assertion that this allows for more effective support to be offered. An expanding ability to take in other perspectives is also communicated in the narrative, with the understanding that this provides space for responding to others with empathy.

Similarly, a broadening perspective is apparent in the patterns discovered through the coding of the data. The space between experience and response that mindfulness training has provided is identified as an influence on my ability to regulate emotions. A greater sense of concern and compassion for others is noticed over time, contributing to the deepening of relationships. A more constructive approach to problem solving and a shift from being emotion-driven to objective-driven is also indicated in the coding patterns, and this shift from internal to external connected to more effective communication and collaboration.

The second research question sought to determine the manner in which my cultivation of mindfulness is perceived to be present in the enactment of leadership, and can be addressed by Findings 1 and 3. In the written record of experience, which captures my internal perceptions, evidence is offered of conscious application of mindful techniques toward the practice of

leadership, as well as a more gradual and organic integration of mindfulness into the daily being and doing of leadership.

The alignment of colleagues' perceptions of my leadership strengths with my own self report indicate that my internal experience of the integration of mindfulness into leadership was visible in my outward behaviors. Particularly noted in the strengths of self-awareness, integrity and selflessness, connections can be drawn between the attributes cultivated through mindfulness practice and these positive attributes recognized by others in my leadership.

The third research question sought to determine how the educational leader's professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues are perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice. This question can be addressed by Findings 1, 2, and 3. Through the process of organically integrating mindfulness practices into the practice of leadership, and applying an increasing understanding of the self toward an expanding attunement to and understanding of others, I was able to evolve my external capacities. Specifically noted in the data, changes toward how I approached my life and work included achieving a better work-life balance, moving beyond reactive emotions to surface issues and speak directly, and opening up to others' perceptions. Each of these allowed me to approach others in a more accepting way, and supported more productive professional exchanges and interactions.

The findings yielded by this study offer implications for practice, leader development programs, and scholarship. These implications include an interesting revelation from the data, that in some dimensions as they were measured by the Leadership Circle Profile™, mindful practices may have contributed to perceptions of inadequacies in leadership. The next chapter concludes the study with a discussion of the findings and consideration of the significance, including the practical and theoretical implications.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This qualitative study of a researcher-leader's attempt to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice, and how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership, emerged from a recognized lack of detail in the research concerning the relationship between mindfulness and leadership behaviors, development and outcomes (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Verdorfer, 2016). The interrogation of the lived experience and self-analysis of my own cognitions, emotions, relationships and practice was entered with the intention to better understand the promise of mindfulness as a resource for fundamental change (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015). Such detail is needed for new knowledge to be constructed regarding the complexity of educational leadership and the potential for mindfulness practice to support leaders in navigating this complexity.

Prompted by suggestions in recent literature that mindfulness practices have the potential to contribute to leadership effectiveness (Aviles & Dent, 2015; Hunter & Chaskalson, 2013; Karssiens et al., 2014; Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015) and the need voiced by scholars for research to examine the relationship between leader mindfulness and effective leadership (Choi & Leroy, 2015; Malinowski & Lim, 2015; Reb et al., 2014; Verdorfer, 2016), this study sought to address the currently limited insight into the application of the practice of mindfulness to the practice of educational leadership.

This chapter concludes the study with a discussion of the findings and consideration of the significance, including practical and theoretical implications. The chapter begins with brief synopses of the purpose of the study, the guiding questions, and the scholarship that served as a foundation for the inquiry. The design of the study and findings are then summarized, followed by a discussion of the implications of the findings, including relevance to existing scholarship.

Recommendations for educational leaders and leader development programs are provided, along with suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with final reflections.

Summary

This study sought to examine the being, becoming and connectedness of an educational leader in a particular context, in a particular moment in time. Documenting my own attempts to cultivate cognitive, relational and emotional competencies through regular mindfulness practice, I sought to investigate how the cultivation of such competencies aligns with the enactment of leadership.

Statement of the Problem

While research in educational leadership practice has grown tremendously in recent years, the understanding of how theory effectively becomes practice is lacking (Robinson, 2010). Leadership development most often involves teaching leadership concepts, frameworks and theories, but rarely focuses on teaching individuals how to learn leadership, or how to develop themselves as leaders as they engage in the practice (Ashford & DeRue, 2012). Recent literature has suggested mindfulness practices have the potential to contribute to leadership effectiveness (Aviles & Dent, 2015; Reb, Sim, et al., 2015; Wells, 2015), yet the potential benefits of mindfulness practices for educational leaders have yet to be fully realized. This study sought to contribute to the research by examining the potential benefits of mindfulness practices in connection with the doing and being of leadership.

Purpose of the Study

Leading the interactions and exchanges of members of an organization requires first, the capacity to understand oneself; second, the capacity to engage in dialogue in order to understand the perspectives of others; and third, the capacity to understand the organization as a system of

interacting and continually changing beings (Drath & Palus, 1994). Mindfulness meditation offers systematic mental training that cultivates meta-awareness as clarity and equanimity increase (self-awareness), develops an ability to effectively modulate one's behavior (self-regulation), and brings about a positive relationship between self and others that transcends self-focused need and increased prosocial characteristics (self-transcendence) (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Mindfulness, therefore, appeared to me to be a crucial element of the adults' work together within a school context and this understanding was the driver for my interest in the questions that guided this study:

1. What are my perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of my role as an educational leader?
2. In what manner is my cultivation of mindfulness perceived to be present in my enactment of educational leadership?
3. How are my professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice?

Review of Literature

The literature review examined contemporary leadership theory and leader development theory and how these contribute to the present understanding of educational leadership. The literature review also offered an exploration of the phenomenon of mindfulness, including a discussion of historical and contemporary definitions and the practices applied to cultivate mindfulness. The mechanisms by which mindfulness practices are theorized to work and the myriad benefits attributed to mindfulness practice were also discussed. A final section of the

literature review served to contextualize the research in the methodological frame of autoethnophenomenography.

Leadership. Contemporary leadership theories consider leadership as a holistic process (Van Wart, 2013) of social and mutual influence (Yukl, 2010), and take into account the contextual and temporal influences that contribute to leadership effectiveness (O'Connell, 2014). Leadership, less often considered a product of the singular actions of an individual, is now more frequently discussed in the literature as a product of the connections and relationships within the system (Bryk et al., 2015; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Leithwood et al., 2008). Leadership is understood to transcend the individual, where leaders are not directly responsible for creating change or innovation, but rather, creating the conditions necessary to enable change or innovation to occur (Lichtenstein et al., 2006). In order to change an organization, the leader must “produce enough people who will change it” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 22).

Understood in this way, leadership is a “collaborative, emergent process of group interaction” where lateral influence is exerted in exchanges between organization members (Cox et al., 2003). The primary aims of leadership – providing direction and exercising influence – are achievable only through work with others (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003), therefore, relationships are key and must be made a priority (Bryk & Schneider, 1996). In light of this conception of leadership, emotional abilities appear crucial to the role and much attention and investigation has been offered to the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership (Goleman & Boyzatis, Sept 2008).

In addition to emotional intelligence, key capacities of leadership referenced in contemporary leadership theory include self-awareness, self-regulation, and reflection (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Leadership development, rather than emphasizing specific knowledge, skills,

and abilities, is beginning to be thought of as the support for the development of the cognitive structures and psychological processes underlying leadership (Day et al., 2009). Leader development is akin to adult development, meaning leaders require experiences that grow their internal capacities and ways of knowing, in order to be better equipped to support and inspire growth in others (Drago-Severson, 2012). Mindfulness, having been theorized to positively affect the development of self-control, objectivity, affect tolerance, enhanced flexibility, equanimity, emotional intelligence, and compassion (D. M. Davis & Hayes, 2011), has begun to be connected to leader development and is beginning to be explored as a tool to support leaders (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015).

Mindfulness. Though the concept originated more than 2500 years ago, mindfulness is increasingly part of popular culture and is currently being applied across a diverse range of contexts. The journey through a plurality of cultural traditions to a plurality of modern-day applications has resulted in a lack of clarity regarding what mindfulness actually is, and how it is defined. Some of the confusion stems from the ability of the term to denote different things in different circumstances. One can experience a *state* of mindfulness in a given moment, engage in a self-induced or prescribed intentional *practice* of mindfulness, or develop a long-term, general *trait* of mindfulness (R. D. Siegel et al., 2008).

In the journey across Buddhist schools (Batchelor, 2011; Bodhi, 2011; J. Dunne, 2011; Olendzki, 2011), between Buddhist tradition and contemporary Western science (Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011; Grossman & Van Dam, 2011), among Western researchers (Baer et al., 2008; Bishop et al., 2004; Hayes & Shenk, 2004; Rosch, 2007) and even within individual scholars (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, 2003, 2011), multiple attempts have been made to denote all that is meant by the term mindfulness. Of the various attempts, perhaps the most frequently cited is that of

Kabat-Zinn (2003) who described mindfulness as “the awareness that emerges from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (p. 145). Kabat-Zinn’s definition and similar definitions that have been proposed in scientific and clinical interpretations (Baer et al., 2008; Bishop et al., 2004), however, are critiqued for not being fully aligned with the concept of mindfulness from the Classical Buddhist tradition (Dreyfus, 2011; Gethin, 2011). Avoiding the possible risk of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) being seen as Buddhist, Kabat-Zinn (2011) admittedly understated its origins in favor of a more instrumental and operational emphasis on what is involved in the practice.

Three areas of tension are identified in the various conceptualizations of mindfulness: (a) its relationship to memory; (b) its relationship to conceptual and discursive thinking; and (c) its relationship to wholesome and unwholesome states of mind (Gethin, 2015). Other key differences noted in the proposed definitions include the interchangeable use of attention, awareness, and consciousness, and the inclusion or exclusion of a particular attitude or evaluative stance. Additionally, differences in the definitions have been attributed to the incorporation of the practices or behaviors leading to mindfulness or outcomes of mindfulness as elements of the definition (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b; Quaglia et al., 2015). Despite the numerous differences, however, there is clear agreement between and within Buddhist scholarship and Western science that mindfulness refers to attention to experience in the present moment (Grossman, 2008).

Through a combination of increased attention regulation, body awareness, emotion regulation, and perspective taking, mindfulness meditation practice produces cognitive, affective and interpersonal benefits (Holzel, Lazar, et al., 2011). The benefits offered by mindfulness

practices are being explored in a variety of fields, including leadership, for its demonstrated potential to reduce stress (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009), to improve regulation of emotion (K. W. Brown et al., 2007b), and to increase situational awareness and objectivity (Garland et al., 2015). While personal transformation and ease of suffering are individual intentions of the practice, the path of mindfulness is not solely reserved for the individual. Understood in its broadest sense, mindfulness has social and collective aims. Traditionally, an individual's mindfulness practice has an ethical focus on the well-being of all living things, not solely the self. Considered broadly, mindfulness offers potential benefits for educational leaders in the development of the leader's own identity and well-being, and in the development of the leader's potential for positive interaction and influence with others.

Autoethnophenomenography. Sharing many similarities with mindfulness practice, the combined research methods of autoethnography and autophenomenography offer more than simply a way of knowing about the world, but also a way of being in the world.

Autoethnography and autophenomenography require one to observe oneself, to interrogate one's thoughts, beliefs, and actions; to challenge one's own assumptions; and to inquire over and over again in order to penetrate the layers of one's own defenses, fears, and insecurities (Ellis & Adams, 2014). This practice, essentially an interrogation of one's identity, has been said to result in increased consciousness (Starr, 2010). Drawing upon Freire's (1970) concept of conscientization, the study of the self requires a way of being and of living "consciously, emotionally, and reflexively" (Ellis & Adams, 2014, p. 271).

Autographic methods recognize and utilize "subjective experience as an intrinsic part of research" (Davies, 1999, p. 5), opposing the traditional positivist view that research necessitates detachment and objectivity (Adler & Adler, 1987) and instead demanding "personal engagement

as a medium through which deeper understanding is achieved and communicated” (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, p. 74). Due to the subjective foundations, autographic research methods have not been positively embraced by some in academia. Rather, these methods have been viewed with skepticism, and often accused of being self-absorbed (L. Anderson, 2006a; Delamont, 2007) and egotistical (Coffey, 1999; Roth, 2009) due to the “navel-gazing” (Madison, 2006) focus on the self. Proponents of autoethnography admit the method disrupts common norms of research practice (Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013), however, suggest that a focus on the self is the only way some experiences can become known and understood (Denzin, 1997; Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2007; Anderson, 2006).

The personal involvement demanded by autographic methods provides a direct link from the micro level of personal, lived experience with the macro level of culture (Allen-Collinson, 2016) or phenomena (van Manen, 1990), filling experiential gaps in traditional research by making the researcher’s own emotion, voice and personal perspectives accessible (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013; Ellis & Adams, 2014). Defenders of autographic research argue that the social world as it is constructed and experienced cannot be understood without taking a subjective view (L. Richardson, 1999). Contradicting Delamont (2007) and other critics, scholars utilizing the methods claim these are “by no means a choice for the lazy,” (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2011, p. 87) with the process of data collection and analysis requiring considerable time, effort, resilience and conviction (Denshire, 2013). The very personal nature of these methods of inquiry is seen by proponents as a distinct advantage, in the ability to make meaning and knowledge accessible and available to a wider audience by creating texts that invite readers in rather than keep them at a distance (Doloriert, 2016).

Design of the Study

Selected for its alignment with the subject matter, with the educational context and with my own positionality, the combination of the autoethnographic approach with the insights of phenomenology allowed me to examine and analyze my subjective experience of mindfulness and leadership as both the *doing* of the activities and the *being* in the body. This provided the opportunity to develop not only a cognitive understanding of the training and performance of these activities, but also the corporal, embedded-in-everyday-practice, embodied understanding of how it actually feels to be a mindful leader (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014).

Data collection included the recording of my own behaviors, thoughts and emotions as they naturally occurred in relation to my personal practice of mindfulness and my role as an educational leader. Self-observation collection included both interval and occurrence recording techniques, offering information on the patterns and frequency of cognition, emotion, behavior, and interaction. Documents I had authored, such as emails, blog posts and written feedback to colleagues were collected for potential evidence of mindful leadership practices. Introspectively generated data were paired with efforts to gather external perspectives to provide data to confirm or reject my own internal view. Using The Leadership Circle Profile™ 360° leadership assessment (R. J. Anderson, 2006), insight into my professional relationships with colleagues and my enactment of leadership was provided. This external feedback on my leadership performance, habits and perceptions served as a comparison to the self-reported data.

Data analysis was intertwined and interactive with the data collection process, taking place concurrently. At the end of the six-month data collection period, I turned to the cumulated written record that had been produced with a more intense, concentrated and comprehensive effort to analyze the data (van Manen, 1990). All fieldnotes and collected documents were read

in their entirety to become immersed in the details and to take in the record of experience as it evolved over time, referred to as the “holistic approach” by van Manen (1990). This re-reading provided an opportunity to perceive changes over time, to gain fresh insights, and to note ideas or key concepts related to the research questions in an initial coding cycle.

This open-ended process resulted in a large number of codes to name the range of meanings found in the data and those codes were expressed in a variety of forms. Related themes were identified as the initial concepts were linked to larger ideas, synthesizing the codes into categories. Noting the patterns in the Categorical Codes I was led to Dramaturgical Coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldana, 2016), and proceeded through a second cycle of coding by applying conventions of character (Objectives, Conflicts, Tactics, Values, Emotions and Subtext) as the main categorical labels. Finally, I sought to draw some conclusions by taking all that I had learned from the previous processes of essence capturing and reducing the data to identify its many dimensions, to now reconfigure the various ideas and concepts into theories.

Findings

The analysis of the study data yielded three findings. The primary finding offered by this study is that the practice of mindfulness was perceived to become an embedded part of my way of thinking and being. The shifts happened slowly and subtly, as I cultivated incremental changes in self-awareness and self-regulation and became better able to offer space between experience and reaction. Though there are instances in which I made a conscious effort to apply specific techniques learned in mindfulness courses to professional efforts in the school context, for the most part, the integration of mindfulness and leadership is not through a conscious effort, but happens naturally and organically.

The second finding is that the understanding of the self, encouraged by mindfulness practice, assisted in the development of my internal capacities, which in turn, promoted continual adaptation of my external capacities. This inside-out pattern is illustrated in the data, with the record of experience shifting from an internal focus and the communication of my own emotion and experience, to an external focus and the offering of attention to and curiosity toward others' experience.

The third finding is that self-identified areas of strength and areas for growth were mirrored in the strengths and areas for growth recognized by my colleagues in the 360° assessment of my leadership. My internal perceptions of efficacy were closely aligned with colleagues' reported external perceptions on 5 of the 6 dimensions. On the 18 Creative competencies, only two major differences in scores were noted. On the 11 Reactive styles, I rated myself higher than my colleagues in 3 categories, and lower than my colleagues in 3 categories.

Returning to the Research Questions

Insights gained from the analysis and interpretation of the data were applied to the research questions.

What are my perceived connections between mindfulness practice and the ability to meet the cognitive, emotional and relational demands of my role as an educational leader?

Direct connections were drawn from mindfulness practice to the enactment of leadership in a manner aligned with the leadership theory that framed this study. Connections between mindfulness and my ability to meet the demands of my professional role, as evident in the data, include an increased attention toward renewal and replenishment, and an increased ability to respond to issues with less reactivity. Further, increased attunement with others is illustrated in

the data, with the assertion that this allows for more effective support to be offered. An expanding ability to take in other perspectives is also communicated in the narrative, with the understanding that this provides space for responding to others with empathy.

Similarly, the patterns discovered in the analysis made evident a broadening perspective. The space between experience and response that mindfulness training has provided is identified as an influence on my ability to regulate emotions. A greater sense of concern and compassion for others is noticed over time, contributing to the deepening of relationships. A more constructive approach to problem solving and a shift from being emotion-driven to objective-driven is also indicated by the analysis, and this shift from internal to external connected to more effective communication and collaboration.

In what manner is my cultivation of mindfulness perceived to be present in my enactment of educational leadership? In the written record of experience which captures my internal perceptions, evidence is offered of conscious application of mindful techniques toward the practice of leadership, as well as a more gradual and organic integration of mindfulness into the daily being and doing of leadership. The alignment of colleagues' perceptions of my leadership strengths with my own self report indicate that my internal experience of the integration of mindfulness into leadership was visible in my outward behaviors. Particularly noted in the strengths of self-awareness, integrity and selflessness, connections can be drawn between the attributes cultivated through mindfulness practice and these positive attributes recognized by others in my leadership. The alignment of internal and external perceptions on these particular strengths is important because it reflects the leadership orientation posited as fitting for the role.

How are my professional relationships and ways of working with colleagues perceived to be influenced by mindfulness practice? Through the process of organically integrating mindfulness practices into the practice of leadership, and applying an increasing understanding of the self toward an expanding attunement to and understanding of others, my external capacities evolved toward more effective leadership practices. Specifically noted in the data, changes toward how I approached my life and work included achieving a better work-life balance, moving beyond reactive emotions to surface issues and speak directly, and opening up to others' perceptions. Each of these allowed me to approach others in a more accepting way, and supported more productive professional exchanges and interactions.

Implications

This study revealed how the space between self and experience, cultivated through mindfulness practice, offered the opportunity to make better choices and take wiser actions, let go of what was not working, and move forward to explore new possibilities. The findings yielded by this study offer implications for practice, leader development programs and scholarship.

Implications for Practice

Returning to the assumptions drawn from the review of literature on leadership, the findings of this study support these theoretical claims. An inquiry into the self, according to Torbert & Associates (2004), prompts a leader to inquire into present practice and attend carefully to the limits of current meaning structures, leading to reflection on and adjustment of practice. The combination of mindfulness practice with leadership practice forms an embedded system of inquiry into the self, and creates opportunities for leaders to grow internal and external capacities as a matter of course, in day-to-day life and work.

The potential benefits of mindfulness for leadership. Leaders, in their efforts to build learning organizations, require the capacities of relating, self-awareness, authenticity, systems awareness and achieving (Anderson & Adams, 2016). Individuals, as they engage in leadership and seek to continue their own personal growth and development, require experiences that contribute to self-exploration, meta-awareness, openness to other perspectives, and meaningful relationships with others (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2016). Mindfulness meditation has been demonstrated to promote the development of self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence, supporting the growth of qualities deemed necessary for individual development, leadership capacity building, and metanoia. The parallels between mindfulness, adult development, leadership, and learning organizations discussed here are further illustrated in Table 12. This study serves to integrate these ideas, and to draw interest to the practical implications of bringing these theories to life.

Leaders are encouraged to consider integrating mindfulness practice into the practice of leadership in order to explore the potential this offers in creating a deeper sense of self, a more open and realistic view of experience, and an increased flexibility in approaching experience, as these qualities may contribute to greater ease and effectiveness in their professional roles. The deep reflection promoted by mindfulness practice, when applied to leaders' own behavior and the demands of the social interactions within their roles, may facilitate growth and development of a more authentic, responsive, and flexible approach to leadership. The findings of this study suggest that mindfulness practice may support leaders in their development as continually evolving professionals and human beings.

Table 12

Parallels between Mindfulness, Adult Development, Leadership, and Organization Theories

Aspects of Mindfulness (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012)	Self-Transforming Way of Knowing (Drago-Severson, 2012)	Qualities of Leadership (R. J. Anderson & Adams, 2016)	The Learning Organization (Senge, 2006)
Self-awareness Intention and Motivation	Committed to self-exploration & growth Makes sense of self as constantly emerging Owns one's part and explores it with others Judges and questions how self- system works and seeks to improve it	Self-Awareness Personal Learner Authenticity Integrity Courage Achieving Purpose & Vision Decisiveness	Personal mastery Shared vision
Self-regulation Attention regulation Emotion regulation Extinction & Reconsolidation	Understands and manages tremendous complexity Meta-awareness of self-authorship, identity and ideology Listens with presence	Balance Composure Focus Sustainable Productivity	Mental models
Self-transcendence Prosociality Non-attachment & Decentering	Substantively less invested in own identity More open to others' perspectives Can hold out own beliefs and values for critique Examines others' thinking as a way to enhance own thinking Uses language thoughtfully Observes with sensitivity Builds relationships	Selflessness Relating Caring Collaboration Mentoring/Developing Others Interpersonal Intelligence Systems Awareness Community Concern	Team learning Systems thinking

The potential “dark side” of mindfulness for leadership. A close consideration of some of the finer points within the Leadership Circle Profile™, however, led to the conclusion that in some dimensions of leadership assessed, mindful practices may have contributed to perceptions of inadequacies in leadership. Parallels drawn between my experience and internal thought processes and the external interpretation of behavior, suggested the potential for some unintended effects of mindfulness practice on others’ perceptions of my ability to meet the demands of the role of educational leader. In discussing implications, I would be remiss not to mention this discovery and to encourage others to consider how certain qualities developed through mindfulness may have the potential to elicit perceptions of inadequacies in leadership practice, particularly in the areas of decisiveness, distance, and systems awareness.

Decisiveness. Behaviors such as slowing down of decision-making, being open to all options, attempting to incorporate others’ interests and being sensitive to all perspectives are encouraged by mindfulness practice. Examples from my own experience highlight some of these behaviors as present in my actions and interactions, which I consider positive traits. From an outside view, however, this could offer the appearance of indecisiveness as I (seemingly) am slow to come to conclusions on issues. Without the benefit of having an inside view into my mind and thought processes, it may be likely that these behaviors contributed to colleagues’ judgment of my decisiveness as less developed. A mindful approach to leadership may increase the potential for the leader to be viewed from the outside as indecisive.

Distance. There are many examples across the record of experience of a conscious intention to allow emotion to arise and flow through me without reacting. Non-attachment, while offering space between self and experience, may appear to others as withdrawal or being aloof. I would propose that the non-reactivity promoted by mindfulness practice may take an

outward appearance as being emotionally uninvolved or distant, and wonder how great an impact these mindful qualities had on others' assessments of my tendency to separate self from others. The observing stance and nonjudgmental awareness encouraged by mindfulness practice may be interpreted as distancing. The conscious effort to separate self from experience, to be able to stand back and witness, may give reason for some to perceive apathy or indifference.

Systems awareness. The effort to focus on the present moment encouraged through mindfulness practice may translate to less priority offered to long-term objectives. A mindful leader primarily focused on the here and now and cultivating the ability to stay attentive to the present may appear to the outside world as, or may in fact be, focusing too narrowly or too short term. Present-moment awareness may offer an increased ability to articulate clear observations of things as they are, but there appears to be a risk in maintaining a consistent present-moment awareness in that it may limit a leader's ability to articulate a long term view. Similarly, the strong connection to values and the focus on integrity promoted by mindfulness practice may appear outwardly as a decreased awareness of other considerations (i.e. financial), and again, have the possibility of being interpreted or actually experienced as focusing too narrowly.

The data shows some indication of this, revealing in planning and decision-making conversations a strong focus on the here and now. For example, my very focused attention on supporting the individual development of certain teachers led my awareness to narrowly consider only this factor (supporting development), eliminating all other important considerations from my purview (cost, implementation strategies, effects of changing roles). Perhaps this is a trait or behavior that already existed in my leadership, given my relative lack of experience, but it is interesting to consider how mindfulness practice may serve to reinforce this in some ways.

Considering context. A final thought, in examining possible influences on colleagues' evaluation of leadership, are the contextual elements that may contribute to perceptions of efficacy. How decisions are made, and how effective action is defined in a particular context, may influence the space allowed for mindful practices to be embedded and accepted. My experience provides some evidence that attempts to use mindful communication techniques to invite space for mutual understanding and collaborative decision-making were, in fact, working against the culture of the school environment which is based on a hierarchical structure. Those more accustomed to and comfortable within traditional models of leadership, where power is held by the few and decisions are made and delivered rather than arrived at through shared processes, would likely judge a more mindful approach to leadership as less effective. Behaviors such as slowing down of decision-making, being open to all options, attempting to incorporate others' interests and being sensitive to all perspectives may only serve to create tension in such a context. Leaders in contexts with traditional, hierarchical structures may need to proceed with caution when integrating mindfulness practices into daily life and work, as there may be potential for eliciting certain tensions within the existing interactional and relational dynamics.

Implications for Leader Development Programs

Recognizing the incredibly complex and challenging nature of leadership, a more systematic and explicit integration of self-care training is needed in professional learning and continuing education programs for leaders. Leader development programs would best serve leaders' learning if in addition to building understanding of the what of leadership, the how and why are also addressed. Going beyond the development of knowledge about the characteristics and competencies associated with leadership, leader development should also include knowledge about what leadership looks like and feels like in action, including practice enacting the

cognitive, emotional and behavioral characteristics demanded by the role. Leader development programs should ensure that in addition to learning which capacities are most needed within leadership, developing leaders also learn how to cultivate and integrate these capacities into the being and doing of leadership. Integrating mindfulness practices into the learning of developing leaders offers an opportunity for programs to not only discuss, but to support the development of characteristics that have been identified as essential for leadership.

Further, optimizing leaders' professional efficacy demands attention to self-care and the protection of the leaders' mental, physical and emotional health, and leader development programs should offer attention to this aspect in order to offer practitioners a means of fostering and supporting efficacy in professional practice. As experienced in this study, mindfulness practices direct attention to the self-care and development of leaders. Exploration of the integration of mindfulness training into leader development programs may offer potential for a more supportive and effective learning process for developing leaders. The self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence promoted through mindfulness practice may serve to accelerate the ongoing learning and development of leaders, and this potential should be further explored. My experience also provides evidence of the contribution of mindfulness to recognizing and accepting reality as it is, and to then be able to discern a more skillful reaction or response. Mindfulness practice may serve to support leaders in determining appropriate actions, and more effectively navigating the micropolitics that commonly characterize individual schools and school systems.

Anderson and Adams (2016) note, "the inner game runs the outer game," referring to the essential nature of consciousness in bringing about competence in outward behavior. Senge (2006) shares this contention, stating it is the inner state of the person or people that determines

whether remarkable results will be attained. In leading profound change, shifts in orientation and intention are required, namely “opening the head, opening the heart, and opening the will” (p. 372). Leader development programs would better serve practitioners if they were to offer a balanced approach that addresses not only the technical, managerial, surface level actions of leadership, but the cognitive and emotional processes which lead to such actions.

Leader development programs should offer attention to, and help practitioners to discover more about, the individual meaning-making and decision-making systems, values and beliefs, and mental models that are driving behavior. Developing leaders should gain practice in uncovering and confronting internal beliefs and assumptions. Programs should offer practitioners strategies for increasing self-awareness and emotional intelligence, as these have been strongly correlated with contemporary theories of leadership.

“To become a leader, you must first become a human being.” ~ Confucius

Implications for Scholarship

Leadership. This study was entered with the intention to better understand the promise of mindfulness as a resource for fundamental change, and in the interrogation of my own lived experience, the findings offer support for the application of the practice of mindfulness to the practice of leadership. However, recognizing that this study focuses on a singular leader in a specific context for a short period of time, further research is needed in order to explore how mindfulness practice may serve the ongoing learning and development of leaders.

Examination of leaders in other schools and contexts would be worthwhile, to better understand the conditions or factors that support or inhibit mindful leadership. Recognizing that early childhood leadership is a particular role, and a Reggio Emilia inspired school offers a very distinct context, the conditions and factors which supported or inhibited mindful leadership in

my own experience are not generalizable. Studies within other leadership roles and contexts would serve to offer new insights into the questions driving this study.

Additionally, in recognizing that early childhood leadership is a unique position, research examining applications of mindfulness to this specific role are deemed worthwhile. Early childhood leaders face particularly emotional contexts, with unique challenges of providing care for young children, supporting the pivotal roles of family in early years learning, and developing norms of exchange and reciprocity between children, educators and families. Grounded in inclusive, collaborative relationships, early childhood practice demands leaders with strong interpersonal skills. In the particular position of early childhood leader where one works from a foundational ethic of care, applications of mindfulness may offer substantial benefits. Further study of the integration of mindfulness and early childhood educational leadership could offer important insights for this field.

Research regarding the personal factors that contribute to a mindful approach to leadership is also needed, to explore the individual traits or genetic predispositions that may influence the likelihood that connections between mindfulness and leadership are experienced in practice. Do leaders' experiences integrating mindfulness into professional practice differ by gender? by age? by years of experience in the field? Longitudinal studies which investigate the ongoing transformative experience of leaders engaging in introspective and contemplative practices appears necessary, to further the understanding of how these processes unfold internally within the individual and externally in the professional engagements and interactions of leadership.

Studies that further explore leaders' subjective experiences of mindful leadership and the perceived changes that are noted in their cognitive, emotional or relational capacities would be

important in addressing the highly variable outcomes that have been associated with mindfulness practice across individuals and contexts. How do different individual leaders understand the influences of mindfulness practice on their lives and work? What internal and external changes do individual leaders report, and how do these compare across individuals? What value do individual leaders attribute to a practice of mindful leadership and is this consistent across individuals?

Also of interest would be a comparison of the individual pursuit of a mindful approach to leadership to a group or collective pursuit. In recording my individual and at most times isolated experience, there were many instances in which I wished I had someone else to talk with about the various happenings both internally and externally. Further research may wish to explore what it means to have a network of leaders in similar roles in a variety of settings sharing their experiences of integration of mindfulness and leadership. Does this contribute to an acceleration of the potentials being recognized within experience?

Research which continues to pair leaders' subjective experience with others' observations of leader behavior would also be intriguing, to contribute to the understanding of how the internal experience of mindfulness practice becomes externally visible in behavior. Are internally reported changes consistently confirmed by external reports? If there are differences between internal and external report, is this simply a matter of internal change needing time to become visible in behavior, meaning there is some time delay that should be anticipated? Alternatively, can the differences be attributed to self-report bias?

Mindfulness. In addition to the lingering questions proposed by previous research, including queries about the nature of mindfulness, how exactly it works, and the extent and

nature of training that will result in the most noticeable effects, this study illuminated further questions for exploration.

Mindfulness, first studied from a clinical perspective, has been explored primarily for its potential to alleviate suffering and address a variety of health and wellbeing issues. This clinical perspective, while tremendously valuable, concentrates on the individual and on the intrapersonal benefits of mindfulness practice, such as stress reduction. Organizations would undoubtedly benefit from mindful employees experiencing less stress and burnout and demonstrating increased job satisfaction and performance, and a continued examination of the applications of mindfulness toward individual professional effectiveness is warranted. However, the nature of organizations being comprised of mutually dependent, interconnected, and interactive behaviors indicates that the interpersonal benefits of mindfulness may have greater impact on work environments. Research is needed to investigate the potential for mindfulness to influence the well-being and effectiveness of organizations as a collective.

In an examination of mindfulness in organizations, based on the insights gained from this study, it appears that a multi-faceted research agenda is necessary to broaden understanding. Expanding the scope of research to explore the interplay between mindfulness and organizations is suggested, looking not only at the outcomes or benefits of mindfulness for organizations, but also considering the contextual supports or hindrances to mindfulness within organizations. Choi and Leroy (2015) suggest, “Just as a caterpillar can take the form of an insect, cocoon or butterfly, depending on the individual and its context, mindfulness may also appear in different forms” (p. 89). Further research on the interplay between mindfulness, the individual, and the organization would be a worthy and important endeavor.

Additionally, in expanding the scope of research, it is important to consider the potential for less favorable influences of mindfulness to surface within this interplay between mindfulness, the individual, and the organization. The possibility for negative consequences to result from the introduction of mindfulness also deserves attention in the research, particularly in relation to the “McMindfulness” (Purser & Loy, 2013) trend, with conceptualizations and applications of mindfulness being so reduced that the essence and richness of the practice is lost. By no means serving to reduce the positive and beneficial aspects of mindfulness that have been reported and continue to be discovered, this examination of the “dark side” of mindfulness (Reb, Sim, et al., 2015) is an area calling out for future exploration. The risks of mindfulness are beginning to be explored, in light of the potential for mindfulness to cause harm or distress to particularly vulnerable populations (Burrows, 2017). This field of research could be expanded to include the detrimental effects of introducing “McMindfulness” to leadership or to educational contexts in ways that make the practice the end instead of the means.

Finally, studying mindfulness within an organizational context demands new methods and questions, as most of the designs and instruments used in previous research come from an individual and clinical perspective. Mindfulness, as a construct, and organizations, as contexts, are both highly complex, and the quantitative data offered by surveys does not seem well-suited for capturing the nuanced qualities and ebb-and-flow nature of consciousness and human interaction. Qualitative methods, particularly those allowing the researcher to connect at an experiential level, appear most well-suited for this area of research. Longitudinal methods which offer opportunities for an in-depth view of change over time and observation of the unfolding of new patterns of thinking and being under the influences of mindfulness practice are deemed necessary. Longitudinal methods also appear to offer the most promise for research in

leadership, as these would offer insight into the developmental trajectories of leaders and how and why leaders develop – questions that as yet remain unanswered.

Autographic Methods. The combination of autoethnographic and phenomenological methods allowed me to examine and analyze my subjective experience of mindfulness and leadership as both the doing of the activities and the being in the body. This provided the opportunity to communicate not only a cognitive understanding of leadership, but also the corporal, embedded-in-everyday-practice embodied understanding of how it actually feels to be a leader. This study is one demonstration of how autographic methods can contribute to scholarship on educational leadership, revealing what other methods are unable to reveal by making visible the internal processes applied to the work.

Leadership, as a practice, requires action in concrete situations and relationships, and is therefore an experience *of* and *in* the body, as much as it is *of* and *in* the mind, as much as it is *of* and *in* a particular culture and context. Recognizing how each of these interact and influence how leadership is portrayed and experienced, this approach offers potential for others to deeply explore the questions of how and why leaders develop. Autographic methods make available deliberate and focused inquiry that supports a leader in connecting to her work and her life, as a means of purposefully improving practice. The conscious and systematic introspection offered to experience by autographic methods prompt the reflection in and on action (Schon, 1983) that has been deemed necessary for professional growth, and therefore, these methods allow practitioners to become aware of their implicit knowledge and learn from their experience, while also providing valuable insight to others seeking to better understand the processes of leadership.

Increased use of autographic methods within educational leadership could serve to establish more firmly the contributions these methods make to the profession. Practitioner

inquiry offers a valuable source of practical information, addressing the issues and challenges of educational leadership from an authentic voice that others can relate to and easily learn from. This appears particularly valuable in a profession that has been described and identified as isolating. In engaging in self-driven inquiry, educational leaders have the potential to connect with one another on a deep level, sharing experience in a way that allows us to learn from one another and feel less alone in our individual professional endeavors.

Limitations

This study is subject to the limitations true of all self-report measures, in that bias is a clear danger. Social desirability in this particular study is three-fold, in the desire to be viewed as a capable practitioner of mindfulness, as a capable educational leader, and as a capable researcher.

There is also the difficulty in determining if it is mindfulness practice or other moderating variables that contribute to the reported cognitive, affective or physiological effects experienced. Genetics and personality could be contributing factors to the choices made in the enactment of leadership, and personal background and experience definitely play a significant part in how the role is carried out. While understood as a state of consciousness which can be enhanced through training, mindfulness is also understood as a natural human capacity or trait (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003). Variations in trait levels of mindfulness experienced by individuals are believed to be due to genetic predisposition as well as environmental influences (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015).

Presented previously as offering potential barriers to mindfulness, the contextual elements of the workplace may also support and contribute to an individual's levels of mindfulness within behavior, emotions, and attention (Dane & Brummel, 2013). Though the

hierarchical nature of my particular school context has been attributed to certain tensions arising in response to a more mindful approach to leadership, there are many other qualities of the school context which served to foster a mindful approach. The philosophical foundations of the setting certainly supported the continued growth and learning of every individual, myself included, and provided the space, acceptance and encouragement for this research.

Further, there is also the element of time as a possible contributing factor, with relationships deepening and leadership evolving simply as an effect of ongoing interaction with colleagues and enactment of the role, rather than directly impacted by the leader's cultivation of mindfulness. This combination of personal and contextual factors cannot be controlled for.

The non-traditional trustworthiness criteria connected to autographic methods may also be viewed as limitations of the study, as the reliability, validity and generalizability of the findings are not able to be upheld to the same processes and standards as other types of research. Since the study focuses on a singular leader in a specific context, this limits the knowledge claims that can be made from this research. This study has heuristic value, for educational leaders in other settings wanting to explore the potential of mindfulness, and relays a broader message about the need for support in developing a leader identity.

Concluding Remarks

Returning to the *ensō* symbol which opened this inquiry, the imperfection and connectedness that are inherent aspects of human existence, represented by the unfinished circle, are visible in my experience and in the findings of this study. The open circle, which also communicates that everything is part of something greater than itself, reflects the integrated nature of this inquiry, in that the study of self is inherent not only in the methods chosen, but in both the practice of mindfulness and the practice of leadership. Inner work, whether through

contemplative practice or practitioner inquiry or simply the inevitable reflection that is part of enacting leadership, was understood in my experience to be a prerequisite to personal and professional development.

The symbol which communicates that the path of life's journey never reaches a destination, but continues infinitely, is also evident in the circular nature of this inquiry. As one journey ends, another begins, and the process of development as a leader and as a human being is continually unfolding. The hand-drawn, one brushstroke circle is representative of the efforts of this study's personal and professional inquiry, symbolic of the creator being fully exposed at one particular moment in time.

I hope that this study will inspire other educational leaders to contribute to knowledge in their field by examining their own personal experience, using methods that offer humanity and realism to the life and work under investigation. It has been an invaluable experience for me to discover new meaning in everyday moments, and I encourage others to dive deeply into their own stories for the depth of knowledge that may be gained. The practice of introspection and interrogation is daunting and at times assaulting, but in the process, a better understanding of your self, your relationships and your work will prove to be invaluable learning – for you and for those accompany you on your journey.

“When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be. ~ Lao Tzu



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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter Requesting Participation

Overview of Planned Research

I am studying the application of mindfulness to school leadership. The primary purpose of this research is to examine my own experience as an educational leader. I will be recording and analyzing my efforts to cultivate attentional, cognitive and affective qualities through mindfulness, and how cultivation of such qualities aligns with the enactment of leadership. To support me in my research I will need sources outside of myself to enhance the accuracy and validity of my findings. All data collection efforts are an attempt to engage in interrogation of my own personal experiences and beliefs, and how these are reflected in the practice of my role as educational leader.

I hope to use the information obtained from this study to shed light on the relationship between mindfulness and leadership, toward the construction of more effective leadership development and support. I also hope to contribute to the knowledge about construction of learning organizations that allow people to perform well and be well.

Participation

Your participation in this research will be coincident with your everyday experiences within our school context, in particular, your everyday exchanges and personal interactions with me. In order for me to gain perspective, I will be reflecting on our exchanges and interactions so that I may analyze my own behaviors and thought processes.

Additionally, you will have the option to participate in an evaluation process of my leadership that will entail a standardized 360° tool as well as a guided interview, conducted by an outside consulting firm. Your responses to this evaluation will be anonymous. I will have no knowledge of the identities of those participating in the leadership evaluation, nor will any of the data provided to me as a result of the evaluation offer any indication of the identities of those participating. The results are presented to me by the firm as averaged data, with no individualized information. There is no cost, nor compensation, for your participation in this research.

Possible Risks

There are minimal risks and/or discomforts associated with this research. The exposure of personal vulnerabilities that is a normal aspect of teaching in a collaborative community may be heightened by your knowledge of me, the researcher's, focused attention, however, it is I, the

researcher, who will be most vulnerable to exposure as the subject of the study.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Your name will not be used, nor will you be identified personally, in any way or at any time, in the publication of this research. Within the dissertation, it may be necessary to identify you by position (e.g. teacher, administrator), if clarifying your role is relevant to the situation being discussed.

All documents and data will be stored securely on a password-protected database that only I, the researcher, have access to. Data will be kept for 5 years and then destroyed.

The dissertation will be published and accessible to the public, and information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for publication or education, without identification or naming of any participants.

Right of Refusal to Participate or Withdraw

You have the right to decline to participate in this study. If you decide to participate and change your mind, you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. You may decline to participate in certain aspects of the study without withdrawing completely, if any part of this study causes you distress or discomfort.

Your refusal to participate or choice to withdraw will have no negative repercussions, and your decision will be kept private and confidential. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your past, present or future relations with the researcher.

Available Sources of Information

Any questions regarding this study may be directed to me, the researcher, in person, via phone 207-205-3983, or via email afraser5@lesley.edu, or to my faculty advisor, Dr. Paul Naso via phone 671-349-8284 or email pnaso@lesley.edu. You may also contact the Office of the Provost at Lesley University 617-349-8517 with any questions about your rights as a research participant.

There is a Standing Committee for Human Subjects in Research at Lesley University to which complaints or problems concerning any research project may, and should, be reported if they arise. Contact the Committee Chairperson at irb@lesley.edu. You may also contact the Lesley IRB co-chairs Robyn Cruz (rcruz@lesley.edu) or Terry Keeney (tkeeney@lesley.edu).

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lesley University institutional review board.

Appendix B

Guided Meditation Practice Transcripts

Counting Breaths

The following exercise is brief exploration of the movement of the mind. To detect the movement of the mind, what we do is essentially we put a stake down in the ground, and that stake in the ground is anchoring the attention to the breathing and counting the breaths.

So as you breathe in, you can note silently in your own mind “1”

And as you breathe out, note, “2”

And on this way until you reach 10, at which time you begin again at 1.

Now if at any time during that practice you find that you’ve become absorbed in your own thinking, just begin again at 1.

Mindfulness of Breathing

Mindfulness of breathing is a practice that can be a great resource both as a formal mindfulness practice but also as a way of supporting our stability and balance throughout the day.

And so to practice, we can take the formal seated mindfulness posture and as we settle in to the stillness, we can naturally let the sensations of breathing come to us.

You might sense the breath most clearly at the mouth or nose, with the rise and fall of the abdomen, or you might actually sense the breath most clearly broadly across the body, as if the whole body is breathing.

So wherever you sense the breath most clearly, pick that location, rest the attention there.

The relaxed balanced mind, we can attend to the direct sensations of breathing. Not the ideas of the breath, but the simple unfolding sensations of the breath as it comes and goes.

Of course the mind is not used to attending to something that is involuntary, that doesn’t actually need our attention, and so the tendency is to get pulled into a gravitational orbit, we could say, of memory, planning, concerns . . .

When you notice this, please be gentle with yourself. You can immediately forgive yourself. It wasn’t your fault that you became tangled up in thinking. Instead, we just simply redirect the attention back to the breath, wherever you are attending to it, the mouth or nostrils, the belly, or broadly across the body.

Anchor Words

This is a brief guided practice using anchor words. Anchor words are silent mental labels that we make in our own minds that help us stay tethered to the object of focus, that help us stay rooted in the present moment.

And so the anchor words would depend on what you are attending to, but this focus will be on the breath, and so you might for example, as you are intending to the inhale silently say in your own mind, “Breathing in” and as you exhale, “Breathing out”

Alternatively, if you are attending to the breath in the belly, the rise and fall of the abdomen, you might make the mental note, “Rising” or “Falling”

These are meant to be very gently spoken in your own mind.

The anchor words can be helpful as they seem to occupy some of the bandwidth that ordinary gets used for worries, planning, remembering.

So it’s the simple anchor words that can help create a sense of intimacy with the present moment. And mindfulness is all about becoming more and more intimate with the present moment.

Of course, you’ll notice that sometimes the gravitational pull of the thinking world gets strong, pulls you into its orbit, and when you notice that you’ve become caught up in thinking, you might just gently use the word “Thinking” or “Remembering” or “Planning” – something very simple that helps you acknowledge – “Ahh, I was caught in the world of thought and now I’m redirecting the attention, in a very gentle way, back to the breathing.”

Body Scan

In this session, we’re going to work a little bit with mindfulness of the body. There are a few different ways of approaching the body in practice. For this series, I invite you to lay down. When working with the body initially, lying down can be very useful.

Legs open, arms out to the side, palms facing up, just finding the natural sense of the whole body stretched out, open, and relaxed.

The first thing that we want to find in this position is the sense of gravity itself.

So, our entry point or gateway into the body is going to be using gravity as a force to ground out nervous system. And the way we do that is very simple. We just bring our awareness to this downward force that is always acting on our physiology. But particularly when we are activated or stressed, we tend not to notice it, it’s like we’re top heavy. So to counteract that we focus on this organic sense of sinking. All of the bones, the fluids, the tissues of the body, everything within our skin, is just allowed to sink into the floor completely. There’s not a single cell in the body that is trying to hold anything up. And there’s just a complete surrender to the sense of weight. Sinking in.

We've only been doing that for a minute or so, but you'll notice that something has shifted in your experience just from that sinking. One thing that you might notice is that you might feel the inside of the body more. Particularly if your eyes are soft or closed right now, how do you even know that you have a body? You know it because you feel it. And you feel it as sensation, in the present moment.

And just notice how the grounding of the nervous system reveals a whole world of sensation in the inner body that was previously unconscious.

It might just be the hands, something as simple as the tingling sensation of the hands.

Or sensations in the chest.

Or the breath sensations.

So just noticing this inner body we have. The feeling of the inner body.

And for the next couple of minutes, we are going to do a scan through body just to encourage that, to bring out that sense of the inner body even more.

To do that we will start at the head, the skull cavity, the face, the forehead, the pallet, the tongue – and just checking, is there anything that you are holding in the face? Is the face contorting and still trying to focus on something from the day? Or are the eyes still tight from looking at a computer screen or phone?

And just sweeping around the face and the skull with your awareness, it's like a flashlight, and as that gentle awareness comes into these places, the forehead, the cheeks, the mouth - it's like the awareness itself is an invitation just to let go. Just to stop doing whatever you don't need to do . . contracting. And everything just goes natural and receptive and soft.

And you can sweep down the body like this, as though awareness is like a flashlight or paintbrush.

Come down from the head through the neck, collarbone, and then splitting down each arm, shoulders, biceps, elbows, wrists, hands – the sensations of the arms being allowed to reveal themselves to you and relax, let go, into the floor.

And coming back up into the chest, the diaphragm, the stomach, center of the spine,

And sweeping down through each leg, the thighs, the knees, the calves and all the way down to the feet.

And then the whole body lying there. And just this gentle focus on the feeling of the body, the whole frame, and all of these sensations that actually let us know that we are alive, that let us know that we can feel all that is available.

Mindfulness is just knowing it, being aware of it, as it unfolds.

Feeling Emotion in the Body

One of the deep resources we have in our mindfulness practice is learning to attend to our emotions as they manifest in the body. There is so much data that we can get from the body. And developing a mindful, equanimous relationship with emotion as it manifests in the body is a profound support to living our lives skillfully

And so we've touched into physical sensations of the body - the breath, the body scan – the coolness of the air, maybe an ache in the knee – but there are also these sensations that we might call emotional.

Along the front axis of the body, the face, the throat the chest the belly, we may be able to detect that there are certain kinds of sensations that seem emotional or seem like responses to what's happening in the world or inside ourselves

The body feels different when we are in intense joy compared to when we are frustrated. Can you sense what that difference might feel like? Some contraction in the chest with the challenging emotions, and a sense of expansiveness and lightness when in joy, delight, or wonder

Emotion we could say has a kind of fingerprint in the body and we are learning to attend to this with mindfulness and equanimity.

We are learning to distill the wisdom from our emotional responses without being driven to our habitual reactions.

So you might take a moment to reflect on something that brings you a great deal of joy, a time in your life that was quite beautiful, a person for whom you feel a great deal of love – just take that into the mind for a moment and notice, how does the body feel? What is the evidence in the body that you are happy in this moment?

These sensations may be centrally located in one place, they may be spread out more broadly across the body. They may be intense or subtle. They might know what emotion is arising or it might be more vague. All of that is okay. We can simply attend to the emotional circuits in the body with mindfulness.

So as you go about your life, there is an encouragement to keep touching back into this emotional body. To learn to listen to the emotional body, to feel its feelings.

As we bring mindfulness to this emotional body, we can also bring our wisdom, what the appropriate response is. Is this something that needs to be addressed, do I need to do something? Or is it just a passing emotion that I can allow to be there?

Taking another moment or two to tune into these emotional circuits in your body.

Kindness Practice

This session is going to look specifically at how to do kindness practice, how to work with a quality or feeling of kindness directed at ourselves, directed at our own experience in our own life.

Sitting and lying down are both options. If you are lying down it can be a nice option to rest a hand on the chest and another on your stomach. You can also do this in a chair, if it is comfortable. Just the soothing, kinesthetic contact of the hands onto the body can be a very powerful aid to doing this practice.

The first thing we want to know about kindness within the context of mindfulness practice is that it is not an idea. It's quite a bit deeper than simply the thought that we should be nice to people or nicer to ourselves.

Within mindfulness practice kindness is actually a felt sense. It is something we feel. And we can use our thoughts and intentions to in some sense cultivate or develop the feeling, but ultimately no matter how we get there, kindness as a specific felt sense or feeling tone is the goal.

So we'll work with a few different ways of jump starting it, if you will.

Our first access point with kindness, is just jumping straight to the feeling. You can do a check in the body now, and the first thing you are going to look for, is the sense of softening. There's this unconditional invitation throughout the body just to melt, and soften and be at enormous ease. It's like you're giving yourself all the permission in the world to let go.

And the acceptance of how your mind is in this moment, how your emotional body is, how your physical body is, the contents of all of that are unconditionally accepted.

There's just this radiant feeling in the body, it's a felt-sense somatic experience, of kindness and acceptance. It's like the deepest love you can give yourself. This feeling of being held, of you holding you. Those warm palms on your stomach and chest, all of that warmth and softness and love and acceptance, it begins to pervade all the tissues of the body, every single cell, deep into the marrow of the bones, the organ system, everything's getting saturated with that softening attention.

And one image you might use is a sponge soaking up water. A very dry sponge – we are dry in this way, the systems not lubricated, we don't give ourselves this kind of loving attention – and as human beings, the whole system is so hungry for it.

So we have the sense of warmth, kindness, love, feeling field spreads and it begins to permeate the body and the body is soaking it in, just drinking it in, there's no barriers to it. It permeates absolutely everything in our system.

You can stick with letting the feeling tone of kindness permeate, or you can move into using the mind a little more.

May I be at ease.

May I completely let go.

May I completely absorb love.

May I be completely open to this kindness.

May I be healthy.

May I be happy.

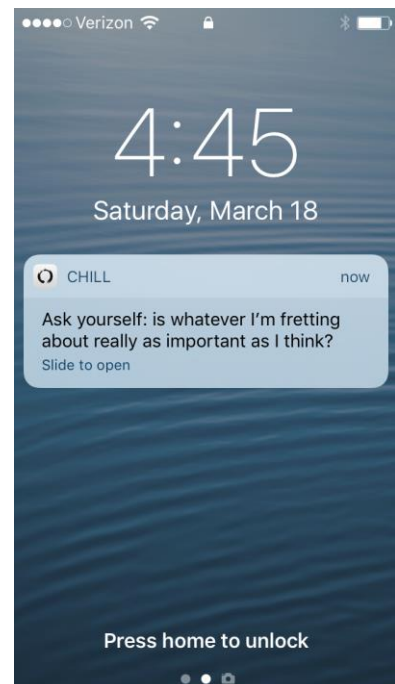
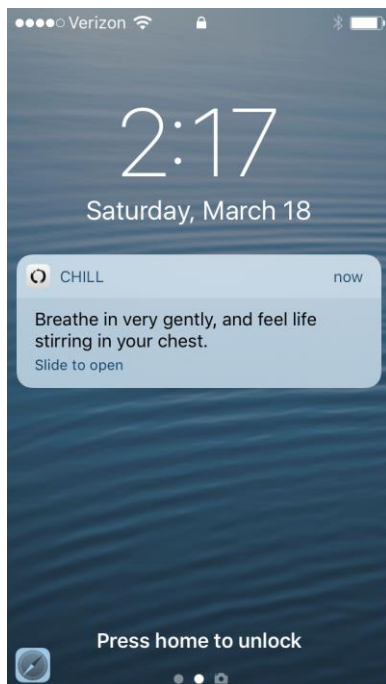
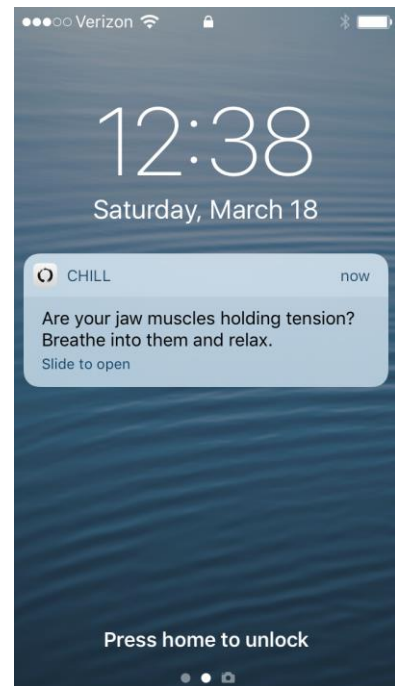
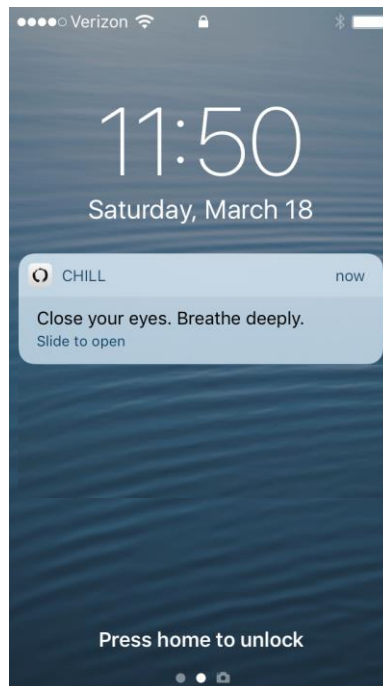
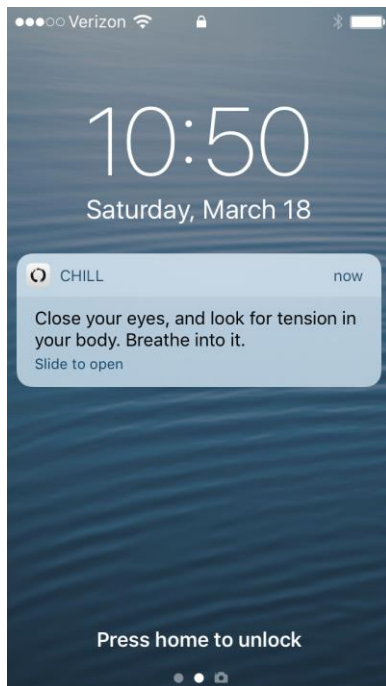
Using the phrases, pick whatever one resonates or make your own, and you can use it as an intentional prompt. Get it moving with the breath, saying it to yourself and see, just by putting intent on that phrase, see what it is waking up in the felt sense.

If it is bringing too much into your mind, you can shorten it, you can just use individual words, like “ease,” “healthy,” “kindness” – whatever is working there.

Lastly, you can also use an image. If there is someone in your life that represents these qualities, particularly if it is difficult for you to direct kindness at yourself, is there someone that directed kindness toward you in a way that felt deeply nourishing - it can even be a pet, it doesn't have to be a human. So you evoke that image and receive that attention and quality from them, and work with the phrases a little bit, all the while focusing on what's happening in the felt sense and waking up that ability to consciously feel kindness.

Appendix C

A Day of iPhone Chill Application Mindfulness Reminders



Appendix D

Personal Memory Journal Entry

January 3, 2017

I can vividly recall the moment –

I'm standing in my living room in Japan, shortly after accepting a position for the following school year as a kindergarten teacher in a school in Singapore. It's dark outside, getting late. The phone rings, and the voice on the other end introduces himself and explains that he will be my Head of School next year. After briefly disclosing his background and history with the school, (we had never actually met during the interview process, so I knew nothing of him), he describes the school leadership structures. He then proceeds to offer me the position of Head of Grade.

I can see my reflection in the window glass.

Disbelief.

I think my response was something like, "Me? Are you sure?" not having the presence to stop myself from sharing my internal doubt aloud.

This was his first moment of insight toward my lack of self-confidence, and I could hear in his reaction – though positive and generous and encouraging – that this was not the response he was expecting, or perhaps accustomed to hearing (I imagine he's made quite a few of these phone calls today to all the selected grade level leaders).

He reiterated the responsibilities and benefits associated with the position and suggested I take some time to think about it.

But I'm not a leader. That's just not who I am.

The following day, I remember sharing the news with my close friend and teaching partner, and with my mentor, the director of the school where I was situated at that time. I don't recall whether I shared my hesitation aloud, or whether they could simply read it in my expression of this opportunity, but their responses were aimed at talking me up and talking me into the position. Something to the effect of, "You can do this! You'd be great at it!"

Self-doubt is the thread that runs through my entire leadership journey.

I questioned myself so often in those first few years of trying on this leadership role. The feedback that I received was consistently positive, but always paired with – "You just need a bit more confidence. You have it in you, but you seem hesitant at times to really take the lead."

Even now, fast forward many years and many experiences later –

My current situation so closely mirrors that first foray into leadership. The years since then have been marked with steps further out of the classroom and into the “office”, yet I still question whether I’m the right person for this work. When telling people about the new position I will be taking on next year - Head of School – it brings up the same feelings as I remember from back then. I honestly can’t say it out loud with a straight face, the words always accompanied with a tone of embarrassment or apology and a look of astonishment. I feel my cheeks blush. I search the other person’s expression for signs that their reaction matches my internal feeling – *That can’t be! You? Head of School?!*

“Hey, don’t knock it – that’s an important role.” (email correspondence from a friend, responding to my downplaying of the position)

“Humility is great, but you can take it too far. You need to take more credit for what you’ve accomplished and allow yourself to acknowledge success.” (feedback from school director, responding to my refusal to accept personal ownership of the positive growth the teachers have demonstrated)

Can a reluctant leader be an effective leader?

What if my internal identity is mismatched with my outward job title? If Leader is not an identity I attribute to myself, or strongly connect to, how does that affect my external enactment of the role?

Appendix E

Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) Prompts

Have you had one or more experiences in the last 30 minutes in which mindfulness practice has affected:

your knowledge of yourself as a leader?

your openness to others and how you respond to behavior of others?

the way you act and make decisions as a leader?

how you show your emotions to others?

how you communicate what you really think?

Rate this last 30 minutes on a scale of 1-5 for the experience of feeling self-aware (A), self-regulated (R), and self-transcendent (T). A rating of 5 means this feeling was a very important part of the experience, while a rating of 0 indicates the feeling was not present.

Appendix F

Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) Journal Entry Excerpt

9:00 a.m. Mindfulness Alert:

Know that with practice there comes a time when the mind steadies, relaxes, and concentration becomes undivided. ~ Buddha

Have you had one or more experiences in the last 30 minutes in which mindfulness practice has affected:

In the last 30 minutes, I've been engaged in my weekly 1-1 meeting with another administrator, discussing the opportunity (elsewhere) I am currently interviewing for and whether or not it is something I wish to pursue.

your knowledge of yourself as a leader?

ruminations in my mind and aloud in conversation to the effect of – Who do I want to be? What aspects of the job might bring me fulfillment?

I'm more aware of the constant narration in my head as I carry out conversations with others these days.

your openness to others and how you respond to behavior of others?

curious about the administrator's response to this choice I've made, and how encouraging and supportive she is being. It almost feels as though she wants me to leave, in a way, but that may just be my self-deprecating tendencies interpreting her behavior.

the way you act and make decisions as a leader?

n/a

how you show your emotions to others?

I feel like I'm keeping everything inside, not revealing too much. I wonder if this is true from her perspective. Can she tell, even though I'm trying not to show it, that in my mind, I've already accepted that this move is inevitable?

I've never been all that good at hiding my emotions. Mindfulness techniques have helped me to stay grounded, particularly in moments of anger and frustration, and to feel as though I am managing these feelings with greater ease and less outward visibility.

how you communicate what you really think?

I don't always communicate what I really think, by choice. In this case, I am consciously holding back information and keeping the full picture hidden. I don't exactly know why.

Not sure that mindfulness practice has affected this.

Ratings: A – 4, R – 4, T – 2

Very focused on the self and internal in these moments

10:20 a.m. Mindfulness Reminder:

Close your eyes, and look for tension in your body. Breathe into it.

Have you had one or more experiences in the last 30 minutes in which mindfulness practice has affected:

In the last 30 minutes, I've been reviewing my morning conversation with the other administrator with my colleague, another fellow administrator, and discussing with her my true feelings about potentially taking on a Head of School role.

your knowledge of yourself as a leader?

I express worry about the work/life balance, knowing what my experience has been in my current role, and imagining that a step up in role would equate to additional responsibilities and pressures.

I'm recognizing an increased self-awareness regarding how I identify with the role, or at least, with the role as it is defined in my current setting.

your openness to others and how you respond to behavior of others?

I express the feeling that my attraction to the new position may come from an understanding of what I "should" do – meeting others' expectations and following along with the natural progression, where education and experience lead to a certain outcome (climbing the ladder).

Mindfulness may be contributing to my ability to allow these thoughts to surface, and not to suppress the notion that I may be lacking intrinsic motivations, though this brings up negative emotions.

the way you act and make decisions as a leader?

n/a

how you show your emotions to others?

n/a

how you communicate what you really think?

In this conversation, I am able to express what I “would” do, if I had my choice of any future reality – to have more down time, to have more time for myself, more time with my family, to be able to have close peer relationships with colleagues (not to always have to keep a professional distance), the have the ability to be in the background at times

I’m connecting here with the ideas of narrative self and experiential self. Labeling my cognitive responses and emotional reactions to this potential opportunity, I’m experiencing a wide range of thought patterns and taking the time and space to examine my assumptions with a more objective view.

Ratings: A – 4, R – 4, T – 4

Conversation again very focused on the self, but this one feels much more honest and more openly accepting and revealing of my own cognitive and emotional states.

Appendix G

Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) Prompts

Think of your day as a continuous series of scenes in a film. Give each episode a brief name that will help you remember it and write down the approximate time it began and duration. Try to remember each episode in detail and write a few words that will remind you of what was happening. Also try to remember how you felt and what you were thinking at the time.

Rate each episode on a scale of 1-5 for the experience of feeling self-aware (A), self-regulated (R), and self-transcendent (T). A rating of 5 means this feeling was a very important part of the experience, while a rating of 0 indicates the feeling was not present.

Appendix H

Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) Journal Entry Excerpt

Episode 1: Weekly Check-in Meeting

8:15-9:00

I'm caught in the in-between. Stuck in a conversation where it is almost immediately clear that the administrative perspective and the teacher perspective are two north poles of magnets and I'm caught in that invisible repelling force that arises when they are brought together.

Why do some topics raise immediate defensiveness? Rather than a willingness to listen and hear the other perspective, I'm now subject to a tirade expressing a complete close-mindedness to any honest discussion on the matter being raised. The focus is not on why, but who. Who said what. Who can be blamed. Who needs to be confronted and berated until they are convinced that their perspective is wrong.

It's incredibly frustrating. I can feel myself getting agitated and plant my feet firmly on the floor so I can stay connected and not get carried away by the emotions arising. I want to say "Don't shoot the messenger," but in fact, I agree with what the teachers have brought to my attention to relay to (another administrator) and now I completely understand why they were not comfortable addressing this directly themselves. Saying "Don't shoot the messenger" seems to imply that I'm just delivering the thoughts without having any claim to them myself, though now the teacher's perspective is also my own and I'm speaking not just for them but for myself as well.

Therein lies the rub.

I'm not supposed to take their side. I'm not even supposed to be impartial. As a member of the admin team, I must agree with the admin team (or at least that is the expressed expectation).

Where is the room for real dialogue? When will we be willing to confront ourselves and our own shortcomings in order to improve?

If I hear one more time, "We've always done it this way," I think my head might explode.

Rating: S – 5, R – 3, T – 4

Episode 2: Thinking About the Transition

9:30-10:00

In conversation with the Co-Directors To Be who will be splitting my position next year, thinking aloud together about the current reality, and the constant pull on time and attention that is happening as the transition begins. Particularly now that we are in full hiring mode for next year, and as the people who will be supporting these new teachers joining our faculty, naturally they are the ones who are taking the lead on the interview process. This is proving to be challenging for one, however, as (this person) is currently a classroom teacher and still attempting to carry out all the responsibilities associated with that role. (This person's)

reflections on the struggle to balance this state of “in-between” teacher and administrator are so connected to my own experience. I feel that ache of realization that neither role is being carried out as effectively as it could be when one is stuck in the middle – I know it well and am experiencing it across a range of contexts at the moment. I sympathize with the position (this person) is in. Not wanting to let the teaching team down, but at the same time, wanting to establish relationships with the soon to be administrative team. Not wanting to take on too much and risk dropping a ball (there are so many in the air), but at the same time, eager to face new challenges and dive into new experiences.

While (this person) is feeling needed in two places at once, I, on the other hand, am having the opposite experience. My state of in-between is akin to the lame duck period of the presidency. More and more, I’m not invited to contribute to conversations, I’m not part of decision making meetings, I’m not asked to share an opinion. Some of this I understand. In truth, part of me is thankful that my involvement is diminishing because it frees up more time for my research. But on another level, it is hurtful, to feel insignificant.

Rating: A – 4, R – 4, T – 4

Episode 3: Surprise Interview

1:00-1:30

The office this morning has been no less busy than Grand Central Station. One person after another coming in, needing help, needing to talk, needing candy. The sofa has not been empty for a minute. There has been no space or room to simply be for even a minute.

“CAN WE JUST CLOSE THE DOOR!! For 5 minutes. I just need 5 minutes of peace.” (my colleague speaks)

Less than a minute after the door is gently closed, a face in the window and a knock at the door mean the silence is going to be short lived.

“I just need a minute. I’ve been wanting to talk to you all day but it’s been so busy in here!”

2 minutes into that conversation, an unfamiliar face is escorted into the office very awkwardly by another administrator. Signaling to me discreetly behind the person’s back and in hurried, whispered conversation while the person is otherwise engaged, introducing herself to the others occupying the office, I come to understand that what was meant to be a telephone interview has suddenly become an in person interview. Somehow, a miscommunication occurred and SURPRISE! she’s here, and now she’s yours to manage without letting on that we didn’t actually know she was coming today. Umm . . . maybe the barely eaten lunches sitting open on our desks, forks sticking out, obviously a work-in-progress, might be a clue that we are a little caught off guard?

I would laugh, if I weren’t holding back tears. This day is insane.

Rating: A – 3, R – 3, T - 3

Episode 4: In body/Out of body

1:30-2:00

We settle in after making apologies for an awkward start and I attempt to engage in an intelligent conversation aimed at discovering whether this person might be a good fit for the school and if so, what age group might be the best match. I'm conscious of not being present in the conversation and the thoughts in my head are so loud it is difficult to take in anything this woman is sharing about her background and experience.

I JUST WANT TO EAT MY LUNCH!!!!

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO PRETEND TO DO THIS?

HOW AM I GOING TO DROP THIS PERSON INTO A CLASSROOM WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO GIVE THE TEACHERS ANY WARNING?

Somehow I manage to ask a reasonable amount of questions, mutter my way through a tour of the school, and suggest she come back another day for the "second round" interview where she will spend time in a classroom and meet some teachers.

CAN I FINALLY EAT NOW?

Rating: A – 3, R – 2, T - 2

Episode 5: Peace and Quiet

4:00-4:30

The day is done and no sooner are the children dismissed from their classrooms than the teachers are departing as well. Now that everyone is gone, maybe I can actually get started on what I was trying to do all day with constant interruptions.

I can sense my colleague's stress. It surrounds (this person) like an aura. (This person) expresses feeling challenged by the lack of respect shown throughout this day for our time, for our work, for the space of the office that is supposed to be ours.

I think of something that has often occurred to me over the years in this position – that the leader's humanity is often forgotten or overlooked, it seems.

The need for time and space.

The experiencing of feelings and reactions.

The constant holding of others' problems, complaints, emotions.

The need for FOOD.

But how can you say – Don't come in here – without coming across as completely selfish and unapproachable? Where can you draw the line?

Rating: A – 4, R – 3, T - 4

Appendix I

Reflective Journal Entry Excerpt

Some days my mind feels like a kaiten-zushi (conveyor belt sushi restaurant). Thoughts and ideas pass through my mind without stopping to take hold. There's too much activity to have any clarity on anything.

I stand outside myself and know that I am listening without hearing. Or maybe hearing, but not registering.

I'm unable to engage in meaningful conversation or form any coherent statements.

I'm stuck in my own head and missing what is happening all around me. I hear the activity, I see the activity, but I'm not at all connected or present in what is going on.

I'm stuck in the in between.

Here but not here.

Part of now but not part of what is to come.

I retreat into the office, but this makes me more tired, more withdrawn.

I'm exhausted but I feel as though I did nothing today.

Where's the off switch for this constant stream in my head?

Appendix J

Self-Authored Email

Subject: Reflections 2015/16

Dear Teachers,

When I stepped out of the classroom and into this administrative role, I made several promises to myself about the kind of leader I wanted to be and the kind of leadership I hoped to contribute to the school community. One of those promises was to never ask anything of teachers that I didn't expect of myself, and to hold myself accountable in the same ways that teachers are asked to be accountable. I realized, in reading over the teacher survey and taking in the feedback that was offered to me, that while I have asked you to provide your reflections on your end of year evaluations, I haven't been in the habit of offering my reflections back to you, based on your collective evaluation of how I am doing as Educational Director. I apologize that I have not done this before and hope that it will be helpful for you to have some insight into my thinking about my own development as a leader.

In the whole of my career in early childhood, this role of Educational Director is one of unprecedented demands and pressures. Teaching always required me to give of myself and to continually put others first. The constant small crises, heavy responsibilities, and perpetual need to support and inspire people can be exhausting. I know as teachers you all understand this, because you too experience this every day in your classrooms! Now holding responsibility not just for my own classroom of children and parents but for a whole school community raises those demands and pressures to an entirely new level. This role presents unending challenges with no easy solutions. Choices and decisions are rarely crystal clear and communication and decision making are incredibly complex.

Leadership is stressful and it is lonely. Often all the time and effort invested and personal sacrifices made to sustain the community go unnoticed and unappreciated, meaning there is little within the role itself as far as reward, replenishment or renewal. (Very different from my days in the classroom, where the joy of being with children and receiving their freely given affection was more than sufficient food for the soul). The comments you offered in appreciation for what I have done, or what I have offered you, or for the direction the school is going in, go straight to the heart and provide me with the resilience and renewal necessary to continue onward.

I also appreciate the honesty and candor with which your constructive criticism was offered, and your comments regarding areas for improvement are particularly valuable. There are responsibilities within my role that are much more challenging for me, given my personality and natural way of being, and these are consistent with what you recognized as areas for growth.

Communication is clearly one of the bigger issues, for me personally, and for the school as a whole. As an introvert, I realize that my natural preference is for written communication. I often choose this over in the moment, face-to-face discussion, because writing gives me the time to think carefully about the words used and to ensure clarity, but I also often have no choice but to

use written communication out of necessity. It can be achieved in any moment, without demanding the scheduling of a particular window of time, which within our extremely busy schedules is so difficult to find. (I do not send emails at 5 am because I enjoy getting straight to work as soon as I wake up. I do so because often it is the only hour of the day that I have time to breathe and think!)

When face-to-face communication can happen, it is true that I am far more comfortable (and coherent, it seems) in one-to-one conversations than in groups. The bigger the group, the higher my anxiety, and therefore the greater difficulty finding the right words and the most effective means of getting a point across. I don't intend this explanation to come across as an excuse, I merely mean to say that I hear you, and I agree with you - this is an area of focus for me that has been a life-long challenge. I will make every effort to give more attention to in person communication, and to providing clarity in verbal communication. You can also help me by asking questions for clarification when things are not being stated clearly, and I promise I will be glad to have the questions, not be upset by them.

In the feedback, there was mention of teachers (or their work) being compared, or being treated differently and it concerns me greatly that there is this impression of favoritism. I view teacher development in the same way I view child development, that every individual has their own path of growth, at their own pace, and through their own ways of being and doing. I try to promote as much autonomy and flexibility for teachers within the broad guidelines of what is expected because the ways that we think, the things that we know, and the level of our skills in different areas are highly variable. In pointing out different people's strengths, suggesting peer observations, and encouraging exchanges between teachers around professional topics, I am hoping to support an environment where we learn from one another and benefit from the collective wisdom that exists within our faculty. If I have given anyone the impression that you are not valued, respected, or viewed as capable, I am deeply sorry. In reflection, I recognize that my personal connections with members of faculty do vary, and I will focus on developing more meaningful relationships with all of you.

In my third year, I have still not perfected the art of balancing all of the needs of children, parents, teachers, and administration. Figuring out a schedule that allows me to be everywhere I need to be continues to be a challenge, but I will keep working through iterations until one is found that allows my presence to be equally felt with each group (there are 14 next year, not including the 4 Toddler classes).

I will try to find time to offer feedback more regularly and consistently throughout the year, and on a range of areas within your professional development (not just portfolio writing). As a new initiative this year, Storypark certainly demanded the bulk of my attention, and with this focus I understand how it might appear that this is the only area that I value, but that is not the case. I hope to prove otherwise with a more balanced approach to feedback next year.

I've read all of your comments about the school and about me in particular with great interest. As always within a group of people, there is a wide range of opinions and feelings, and I have absorbed both the good and the not so good. I hope that we can continue to grow together, learn from one another and support each other as we all strive to be better at what we

do.

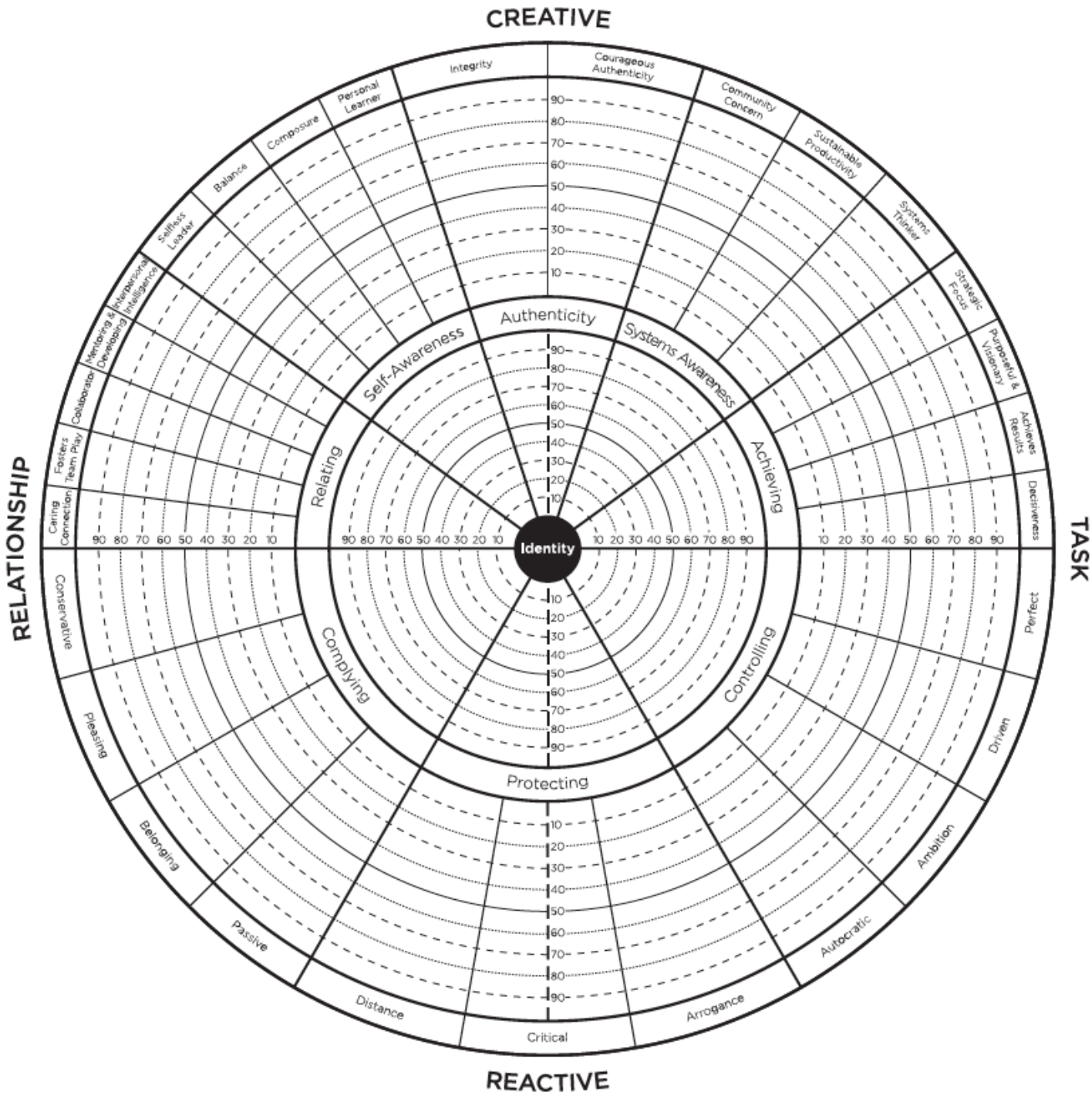
You've given me a lot to think about as we prepare for next year.

Kind regards,

Alyssa

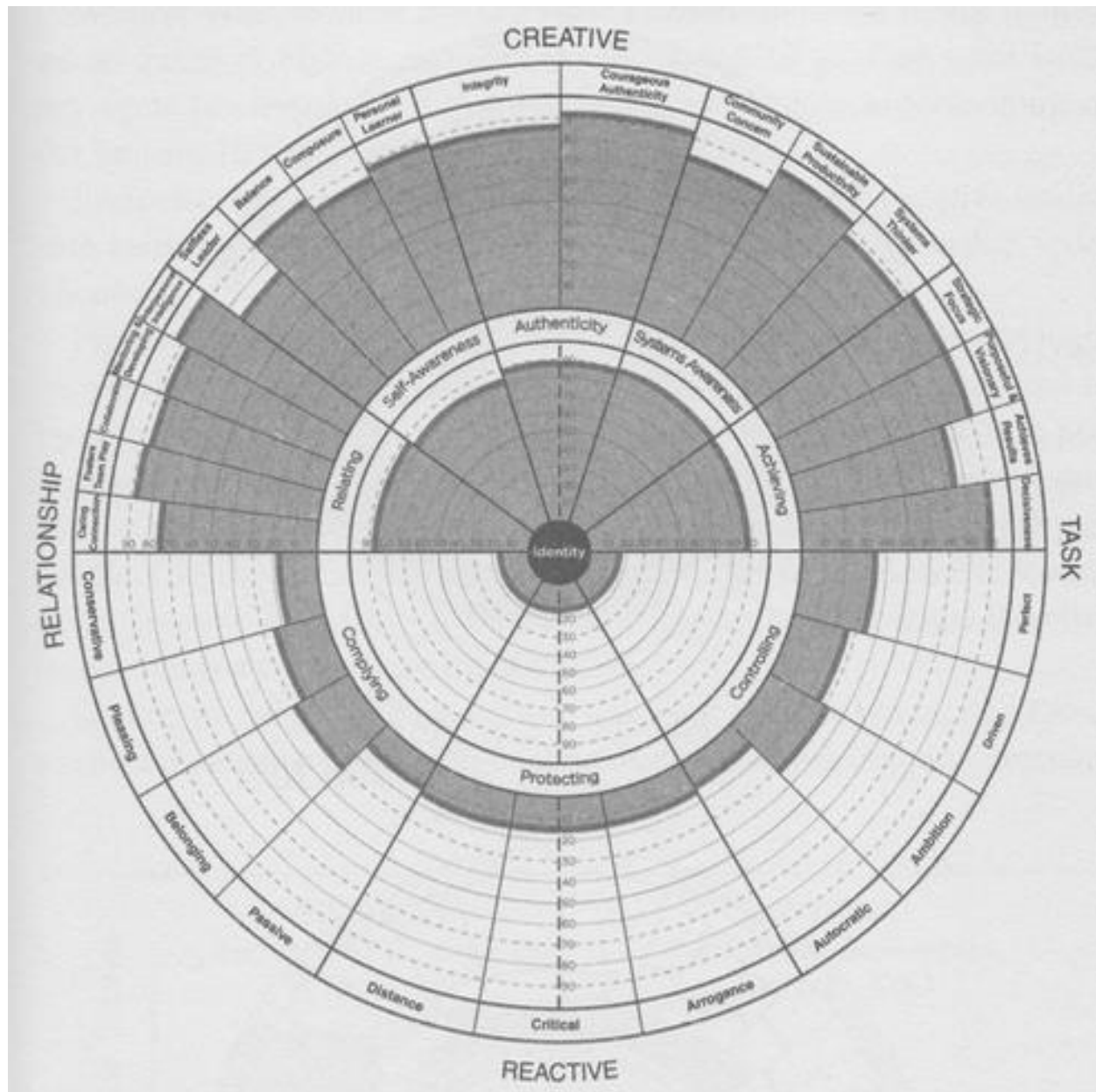
Appendix K

Leadership Circle Profile™ Graphic



Appendix L

Optimal Leadership Profile



(R. J. Anderson & Adams, 2016, p. 93)

Appendix M

Leadership Circle Profile Report – Alyssa Fraser

The Leadership Circle Profile Report

Alyssa Fraser

5/26/2017

Average Response on a 5 point scale

	Self-Evaluation	Evaluators	Boss's Boss	Boss	Peers	Direct Reports	Other
Relating	3.71	3.95	-	-	3.62	4.03	-
Self-Awareness	4.00	4.01	-	-	3.89	4.04	-
Authenticity	3.56	4.07	-	-	4.03	4.08	-
Systems Awareness	3.24	3.61	-	-	3.21	3.71	-
Achieving	3.46	3.91	-	-	3.63	3.98	-
Controlling	2.27	1.95	-	-	2.11	1.91	-
Protecting	2.51	1.77	-	-	2.27	1.64	-
Complying	2.52	2.46	-	-	2.50	2.45	-
Leadership Effectiveness	3.39	3.77	-	-	3.45	3.85	-
Number of Assessors	1	15	0	0	3	12	0

The Leadership Circle Profile Report

Alyssa Fraser

5/26/2017

Percentile Scores: Comparison to the Norm Group

	Self-Evaluation	Evaluators	Boss's Boss	Boss	Peers	Direct Reports	Other
Relating	24 %	45 %	-	-	25 %	47 %	-
Self-Awareness	68 %	60 %	-	-	51 %	56 %	-
Authenticity	9 %	34 %	-	-	37 %	33 %	-
Systems Awareness	14 %	22 %	-	-	8 %	32 %	-
Achieving	12 %	32 %	-	-	20 %	30 %	-
Controlling	28 %	17 %	-	-	30 %	19 %	-
Protecting	71 %	43 %	-	-	75 %	38 %	-
Complying	65 %	86 %	-	-	81 %	84 %	-
Reactive-Creative Scale	26 %	49 %	-	-	29 %	50 %	-
Relationship-Task Balance	45 %	56 %	-	-	75 %	53 %	-
Leadership Potential Utilization	31 %	53 %	-	-	40 %	53 %	-
Leadership Effectiveness	30 %	27 %	-	-	20 %	28 %	-
Number of Assessors	1	15	0	0	3	12	0

THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE PROFILE RESULTS

Alyssa Fraser 5/26/2017	Creative Dimensions						Direct Reports 12	Other 0
	Self 1	Evaluators 15	Boss's Boss 0	Boss 0	Peers 3			
Relating	24 %	45 %	-	-	25 %		47 %	-
Average Response	3.71	3.95	-	-	3.62		4.03	-
Caring Connection	59 %	88 %	-	-	84 %		80 %	-
Average Response	4.09	4.44	-	-	4.42		4.45	-
Fosters Team Play	31 %	45 %	-	-	40 %		42 %	-
Average Response	3.86	4.02	-	-	3.87		4.06	-
Collaborator	20 %	24 %	-	-	4 %		39 %	-
Average Response	3.66	3.77	-	-	3.05		3.96	-
Mentoring & Developing	48 %	46 %	-	-	47 %		41 %	-
Average Response	3.99	3.94	-	-	3.87		3.95	-
Interpersonal Intelligence	4 %	20 %	-	-	6 %		32 %	-
Average Response	3.12	3.67	-	-	3.10		3.81	-
Self-Awareness	68 %	60 %	-	-	51 %		56 %	-
Average Response	4.00	4.01	-	-	3.89		4.04	-
Selfless Leader	75 %	87 %	-	-	49 %		85 %	-
Average Response	4.10	4.23	-	-	3.84		4.33	-
Balance	12 %	14 %	-	-	6 %		26 %	-
Average Response	2.36	3.25	-	-	2.79		3.36	-
Composure	77 %	45 %	-	-	76 %		35 %	-
Average Response	4.28	3.95	-	-	4.24		3.88	-
Personal Learner	89 %	79 %	-	-	72 %		67 %	-
Average Response	4.66	4.28	-	-	4.22		4.29	-
Authenticity	9 %	34 %	-	-	37 %		33 %	-
Average Response	3.56	4.07	-	-	4.03		4.08	-
Integrity	30 %	69 %	-	-	82 %		55 %	-
Average Response	4.00	4.46	-	-	4.59		4.43	-
Courageous Authenticity	6 %	10 %	-	-	6 %		16 %	-
Average Response	2.85	3.46	-	-	3.10		3.55	-

Questions Related to Each Dimension

Creative Dimensions

Relating	
Caring Connection	I connect deeply with others. I am compassionate. I form warm and caring relationships.
Fosters Team Play	I create a positive climate that supports people doing their best. I promote high levels of teamwork through my leadership style. I share leadership.
Collaborator	I negotiate for the best interest of both parties. I work to find common ground. I create common ground for agreement.
Mentoring & Developing	I help direct reports create development plans. I am a people builder/developer. I provide feedback focused on professional growth. I help people learn, improve, and change.
Interpersonal Intelligence	I take responsibility for my part of relationship problems. In a conflict, I accurately restate the opinions of others. I listen openly to criticism and ask questions to further understand. I directly address issues that get in the way of team performance. I display a high degree of skill in resolving conflict.
Self-Awareness	
Selfless Leader	I am relatively uninterested in personal credit. I lead in ways that others say, 'we did it ourselves.' I act with humility. I get the job done with no need to attract attention to myself. I take forthright action without needing recognition.
Balance	I balance work and personal life. I find enough time for personal reflection.
Composure	I am composed under pressure. I am a calming influence in difficult situations. I handle stress and pressure very well.
Personal Learner	I learn from mistakes. I personally search for meaning. I investigate the deeper reality that lies behind events/circumstances. I examine the assumptions that lie behind my actions.
Authenticity	
Integrity	I exhibit personal behavior consistent with my values. I hold to my values during good and bad times. I lead in a manner that is completely aligned with my values.
Courageous Authenticity	I surface the issues others are reluctant to talk about. I speak directly even on controversial issues. I am courageous in meetings.

THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE PROFILE RESULTS

		Creative Dimensions (Continued)					
Alyssa Fraser		Self	Evaluators	Boss's Boss	Boss	Peers	Direct Reports
5/26/2017		1	15	0	0	3	12
Systems Awareness		14 %	22 %	-	-	8 %	32 %
Average Response		3.24	3.61	-	-	3.21	3.71
Community Concern		27 %	55 %	-	-	20 %	60 %
Average Response		3.24	3.86	-	-	3.32	3.99
Sustainable Productivity		3 %	5 %	-	-	2 %	13 %
Average Response		3.00	3.35	-	-	2.83	3.47
Systems Thinker		38 %	27 %	-	-	35 %	29 %
Average Response		3.59	3.56	-	-	3.56	3.56
Achieving		12 %	32 %	-	-	20 %	30 %
Average Response		3.46	3.91	-	-	3.63	3.98
Strategic Focus		7 %	23 %	-	-	12 %	24 %
Average Response		3.16	3.76	-	-	3.39	3.85
Purposeful & Visionary		44 %	63 %	-	-	46 %	53 %
Average Response		3.83	4.12	-	-	3.87	4.18
Achieves Results		58 %	41 %	-	-	49 %	32 %
Average Response		4.25	4.19	-	-	4.16	4.19
Decisiveness		1 %	11 %	-	-	9 %	15 %
Average Response		2.82	3.64	-	-	3.38	3.70

Questions Related to Each Dimension

Creative Dimensions (Continued)

Systems Awareness	
Community Concern	I create vision that goes beyond the organization to include making a positive impact on the world. I attend to the long-term impact of strategic decisions on the community. I balance community welfare with short-term profitability. I live an ethic of service to others and the world. I stress the role of the organization as corporate citizen.
Sustainable Productivity	I balance 'bottom line' results with other organizational goals. I allocate resources appropriately so as not to use people up. I balance short-term results with long-term organizational health.
Systems Thinker	I reduce activities that waste resources. I redesign the system to solve multiple problems simultaneously. I evolve organizational systems until they produce envisioned results.
Achieving	
Strategic Focus	I see the integration between all parts of the system. I accurately anticipate future consequences to current action. I focus in quickly on the key issues. I have a firm grasp of the market place dynamics. I provide strategic direction that is thoroughly thought through. I am a gifted strategist. I integrate multiple streams of information into a coherent strategy. I establish a strategic direction that helps the organization to thrive. I stay abreast of trends in the external environment that could impact the business currently and in the future.
Purposeful & Visionary	I am a good role model for the vision I espouse. I live and work with a deep sense of purpose. I communicate a compelling vision. I inspire others with vision. I provide strategic vision for the organization. I articulate a vision that creates alignment within the organization.
Achieves Results	I am quick to seize opportunities upon noticing them. I pursue results with drive and energy. I am proficient at achieving high quality results on key initiatives. I strive for continuous improvement.
Decisiveness	I am an efficient decision maker. I make the tough decisions when required. I make decisions in a timely manner.

THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE PROFILE RESULTS

Alyssa Fraser 5/26/2017		Reactive Dimensions					
		Self	Evaluators	Boss's Boss	Boss	Peers	Direct Reports
		1	15	0	0	3	12
Controlling		28 %	17 %	-	-	30 %	19 %
Average Response		2.27	1.95	-	-	2.11	1.91
Perfect		47 %	25 %	-	-	90 %	15 %
Average Response		3.44	2.97	-	-	3.90	2.74
Driven		66 %	83 %	-	-	85 %	73 %
Average Response		3.85	3.47	-	-	3.61	3.44
Ambition		6 %	13 %	-	-	16 %	15 %
Average Response		1.66	2.01	-	-	1.97	2.02
Autocratic		37 %	16 %	-	-	27 %	20 %
Average Response		2.17	1.70	-	-	1.85	1.66
Protecting		71 %	43 %	-	-	75 %	38 %
Average Response		2.51	1.77	-	-	2.27	1.64
Arrogance		63 %	15 %	-	-	43 %	21 %
Average Response		2.33	1.33	-	-	1.66	1.25
Critical		19 %	18 %	-	-	33 %	24 %
Average Response		1.70	1.49	-	-	1.64	1.45
Distance		91 %	78 %	-	-	96 %	63 %
Average Response		3.22	2.27	-	-	3.13	2.05
Complying		65 %	86 %	-	-	81 %	84 %
Average Response		2.52	2.46	-	-	2.50	2.45
Passive		69 %	94 %	-	-	88 %	91 %
Average Response		2.23	2.38	-	-	2.38	2.37
Belonging		34 %	69 %	-	-	51 %	69 %
Average Response		2.35	2.52	-	-	2.39	2.55
Pleasing		91 %	53 %	-	-	83 %	47 %
Average Response		4.00	2.62	-	-	3.15	2.48
Conservative		2 %	3 %	-	-	3 %	6 %
Average Response		1.66	2.44	-	-	2.21	2.50

Questions Related to Each Dimension

Reactive Dimensions

Controlling	
Perfect	I believe average is definitely not good enough. I need to perform flawlessly. I expect extremely high standards of others. I am a perfectionist. I try to do everything perfectly well. I need to excel in every situation. I am critical of myself when things don't go as well as expected.
Driven	I try too hard to be the best at everything I take on. I drive myself excessively hard. I push myself too hard. I am a workaholic.
Ambition	I believe winning is what really matters. I believe to feel good, one must constantly move up. I am aggressive. I am excessively ambitious.
Autocratic	I tend to control others. I have to get my own way. I dictate rather than influence what others do. I am domineering. I pursue results at the expense of people.
Protecting	
Arrogance	I am self-centered. I am arrogant. I have too big of an ego.
Critical	I am critical. I hurt people's feelings. I put people down. I am sarcastic and/or cynical.
Distance	I am emotionally distant. I am hard to get to know. I am aloof. I remain standoffish.
Complying	
Passive	I am passive. I lack passion. I am wishy-washy in decision making. I lack drive.
Belonging	I adopt others' points of view so as not to disappoint them. I try to please others by going along to get along. I work too hard for others' acceptance. I am overly conservative. I try too hard to conform to the group's rules/norms. I play it too safe.
Pleasing	I worry about others' judgment. I need the approval of others. I need to be accepted by others. I need to be admired by others.
Conservative	I am conservative. I conform to rules. I follow conventional ways of doing things.

Sorted by Self Percentile

	Self Percentile	Evaluator Percentile
Dimensions		
Pleasing	91 %	53 %
Distance	91 %	78 %
Personal Learner	89 %	79 %
Composure	77 %	45 %
Selfless Leader	75 %	87 %
Passive	69 %	94 %
Driven	66 %	83 %
Arrogance	63 %	15 %
Caring Connection	59 %	88 %
Achieves Results	58 %	41 %
Mentoring & Developing	48 %	46 %
Perfect	47 %	25 %
Purposeful & Visionary	44 %	63 %
Systems Thinker	38 %	27 %
Autocratic	37 %	16 %
Belonging	34 %	69 %
Fosters Team Play	31 %	45 %
Integrity	30 %	69 %
Community Concern	27 %	55 %
Collaborator	20 %	24 %
Critical	19 %	18 %
Balance	12 %	14 %
Strategic Focus	7 %	23 %
Ambition	6 %	13 %
Courageous Authenticity	6 %	10 %
Interpersonal Intelligence	4 %	20 %
Sustainable Productivity	3 %	5 %
Conservative	2 %	3 %
Decisiveness	1 %	11 %
Summary Dimensions		
Protecting	71 %	43 %
Self-Awareness	68 %	60 %
Complying	65 %	86 %
Controlling	28 %	17 %
Relating	24 %	45 %
Systems Awareness	14 %	22 %
Achieving	12 %	32 %
Authenticity	9 %	34 %
Summary Measures		
Relationship-Task Balance	45 %	56 %
Leadership Potential Utilization	31 %	53 %
Leadership Effectiveness	30 %	27 %
Reactive-Creative Scale	26 %	49 %

Sorted by Evaluator Percentile

	Self Percentile	Evaluator Percentile
Dimensions		
Passive	69 %	94 %
Caring Connection	59 %	88 %
Selfless Leader	75 %	87 %
Driven	66 %	83 %
Personal Learner	89 %	79 %
Distance	91 %	78 %
Integrity	30 %	69 %
Belonging	34 %	69 %
Purposeful & Visionary	44 %	63 %
Community Concern	27 %	55 %
Pleasing	91 %	53 %
Mentoring & Developing	48 %	46 %
Composure	77 %	45 %
Fosters Team Play	31 %	45 %
Achieves Results	58 %	41 %
Systems Thinker	38 %	27 %
Perfect	47 %	25 %
Collaborator	20 %	24 %
Strategic Focus	7 %	23 %
Interpersonal Intelligence	4 %	20 %
Critical	19 %	18 %
Autocratic	37 %	16 %
Arrogance	63 %	15 %
Balance	12 %	14 %
Ambition	6 %	13 %
Decisiveness	1 %	11 %
Courageous Authenticity	6 %	10 %
Sustainable Productivity	3 %	5 %
Conservative	2 %	3 %
Summary Dimensions		
Complying	65 %	86 %
Self-Awareness	68 %	60 %
Relating	24 %	45 %
Protecting	71 %	43 %
Authenticity	9 %	34 %
Achieving	12 %	32 %
Systems Awareness	14 %	22 %
Controlling	28 %	17 %
Summary Measures		
Relationship-Task Balance	45 %	56 %
Leadership Potential Utilization	31 %	53 %
Reactive-Creative Scale	26 %	49 %
Leadership Effectiveness	30 %	27 %

Appendix N

First Cycle Codes

Absence	Forecasting	Relaxed
Achievement	Friendship	Respect
Advising	Frustration	Responsibility
Anger	Grateful	Security
Anxious	Grounding in Body	Self-realization
Appreciation	Growth	Sensitive
Assumptions	Guilt	Sensation
Attachment	Honesty	Shame
Attention	Humility	Space
Authenticity	Inadequacy	Speaking
Auto-pilot	Independence	Strategies
Avoidance	Inspired	Stress
Belonging	Integrity	Support
Blame	Intention	Suppression
Breathing	Irritation	Sympathizing
Challenge	Jealous	Thinking
Choice	Joy	Time
Clarity	Judgment	Troubled
Collaboration	Justification	Trust
Communication	Labeling	Uncertainty
Composure	Learning	Urgency
Concern	Listening	Values
Confidence	Loneliness	
Conflict	Morality	
Confrontation	Needs	
Connecting	Nervous	
Criticism	Observation	
Curiosity	Overwhelmed	
Defensiveness	Pausing	
Denial	Peace	
Detached	Planning	
Disappointed	Power	
Discouraged	Praising	
Disinterested	Presence	
Distracted	Procrastination	
Emotion	Proud	
Empathy	Purpose	
Exhaustion	Questioning	
Expression	Reactivity	
Fear	Reflection	

Appendix O

Categorical Codes

Negative Emotions

(Anger, Anxiety, Defensiveness, Disappointed, Discouraged, Exhaustion, Fear, Frustration, Guilt, Irritation, Jealousy, Loneliness, Nervousness, Overwhelmed, Shame, Stress, Troubled, Uncertainty)

Positive Emotions

(Appreciation, Belonging, Confidence, Empathy, Gratitude, Joy, Peacefulness, Pride, Relaxed, Sympathy)

Quality of Presence

(Absence, Attachment, Attention, Authenticity, Auto-pilot, Avoidance, Clarity, Composure, Curiosity, Detached, Disinterested, Distracted, Grounded in Body, Listening, Observing, Reactivity, Suppression, Urgency)

Interpersonal (external)

(Advising, Blaming, Collaboration, Communication, Conflict, Confronting, Connecting, Criticizing, Friendship, Praising, Respect, Security, Support, Trust)

Intrapersonal (internal)

(Assumptions, Choices, Growth, Honesty, Humility, Inadequacy, Independence, Integrity, Intention, Judgment, Justification, Morality, Needs, Procrastination, Purpose, Reflection, Responsibility, Self-realization, Thinking, Uncertainty)

Appendix P

Dramaturgical Codes

Sources for Codes: Leadership Circle Profile (Anderson, R.J., 2016), List of Universal Human Values (Mindful Schools, 2015), Landscape of Emotions (Stone et al., 2010), and researcher-leader's own experience

- 1) OBJ: objectives, motives in the form of action verbs
 - a) Relating
 - i) connecting
 - ii) building relationships
 - iii) caring
 - iv) compassion
 - b) Achieving
 - i) decision-making, decisiveness
 - ii) strategic direction
 - iii) purpose
 - iv) communicating vision
 - c) Controlling
 - i) task accomplishment/achievement
 - ii) high standards
 - iii) results-driven
 - d) Protecting
 - i) "quiet, withdrawn"
 - ii) emotionally distant
 - iii) self-centered
 - e) Complying
 - i) passive, giving power to others
 - ii) aim to please, in need of approval
 - iii) acceptance, belonging
 - iv) fear of judgment
 - f) Mentoring/Developing
 - i) accepting people as they are
 - ii) offering feedback
 - iii) supporting learning
 - iv) advocating for others
 - g) Systems Awareness
 - i) service orientation
 - ii) enhancing long-term effectiveness of organization
 - iii) acting/thinking for whole system
- 2) CON: conflicts or obstacles which prevent researcher-leader from achieving objectives
 - a) Lack of Confidence
 - b) Lack of Experience
 - c) Conflicting Priorities
 - d) Avoiding Conflict/confrontation

- e) Multiple Demands on Attention
 - f) Protecting/hiding Vulnerability
 - g) Others' Inability to Transcend Self-interest
 - h) Needing Support of Institutional structures/group norms
- 3) TAC: strategies applied to achieve objectives
- a) Collaboration
 - i) shared leadership
 - ii) inviting participation
 - iii) finding common ground
 - iv) openness to perspectives
 - b) Interpersonal Intelligence
 - i) taking responsibility
 - ii) listening to understand
 - iii) asking questions
 - iv) giving/receiving emotional support
 - c) Self-awareness
 - i) view of self as learner
 - ii) identifying areas of personal/professional growth
 - d) Selflessness
 - i) humility
 - ii) no need for attention/recognition
 - iii) "we not me"
 - e) Balance
 - i) self-care
 - ii) time for reflection
 - iii) "overworked"
 - f) Composure
 - i) calm under pressure
 - ii) stress management
 - iii) centered, grounded
 - g) Integrity
 - i) behavior consistent with values
 - h) Courageous Authenticity
 - i) surfacing the issues
 - ii) speaking directly
 - iii) dealing with difficult issues/relationship conflicts
- 4) VAL: values held by the researcher-leader
- a) Sustenance/Health
 - i) exercise
 - ii) nutrition
 - iii) rest
 - iv) sustainability
 - b) Safety/Security
 - i) stability
 - ii) comfort
 - iii) familiarity

- iv) order
 - c) Peace/Beauty
 - i) clarity
 - ii) ease
 - iii) equanimity
 - iv) presence
 - v) space
 - d) Autonomy
 - i) choice
 - ii) honesty
 - iii) independence
 - iv) initiative
 - v) power
 - e) Creativity
 - i) discovery
 - ii) fun
 - iii) humor
 - iv) inspiration
 - v) passion
 - f) Meaning/Contribution
 - i) challenge
 - ii) competence
 - iii) effectiveness
 - iv) feedback
 - v) participation
 - g) Empathy/Understanding
 - i) consideration
 - ii) being heard
 - iii) being known
 - iv) respect
 - h) Belonging
 - i) cooperation/solidarity
 - ii) trusted/trusting
 - iii) supported
 - iv) included
- 5) EMO: emotions experienced by the researcher-leader
- a) Love
 - i) affectionate/caring
 - ii) compassionate
 - iii) admiring
 - iv) accepting
 - b) Anger
 - i) frustrated
 - ii) irritated/aggravated/annoyed
 - iii) defensive
 - iv) grouchy/grumpy

- v) resentful
- vi) hostile
- c) Hurt
 - i) disappointed
 - ii) betrayed
 - iii) suffering
- d) Shame
 - i) embarrassed
 - ii) guilty
 - iii) regretful/remorseful/apologetic
 - iv) humiliated
- e) Fear
 - i) anxious/worried/nervous/uneasy
 - ii) suspicious
 - iii) uncertain
 - iv) distressed
 - v) concerned
- f) Self-Doubt
 - i) inadequate/insecure
 - ii) unworthy
 - iii) discouraged
 - iv) confused
 - v) uncomfortable
 - vi) hesitant/reluctant
- g) Joy
 - i) happy
 - ii) satisfied/content
 - iii) excited
 - iv) proud
 - v) relieved
 - vi) amused
- h) Optimism
 - i) hopeful
 - ii) eager
 - iii) interested
- i) Sadness
 - i) depressed
 - ii) hopeless/defeated
 - iii) unhappy
 - iv) overwhelmed
 - v) misunderstood
 - vi) apathetic
- j) Jealous
 - i) envious
 - ii) selfish
- k) Gratitude

- l) Loneliness/Neglect
 - i) empty
 - ii) alienated/isolated
 - iii) rejected/abandoned
- m) Exhaustion
 - i) tired/sleepy/drowsy
 - ii) scattered/unfocused
 - iii) hungry
 - iv) bored
- 6) SUB: subtexts, unspoken thoughts of the researcher-leader
 - a) Judgments
 - b) Attributions
 - c) Blaming
 - d) Characterizations
 - e) Problem-solving

Appendix Q

Code Abbreviation List

CATEGORY: OBJECTIVES	ABBREVIATION: OBJ
OBJ: RELATING	OBJ-REL
OBJ: ACHIEVING	OBJ-ACH
OBJ: CONTROLLING	OBJ-CONT
OBJ: PROTECTING	OBJ-PRO
OBJ: COMPLYING	OBJ-COMP
OBJ: MENTORING/DEVELOPING	OBJ-DEV
OBJ: SYSTEMS AWARENESS	OBJ-SA
CATEGORY: CONFLICTS	ABBREVIATION: CON
CON: LACK OF CONFIDENCE	CON-CON
CON: LACK OF EXPERIENCE	CON-EXP
CON: CONFLICTING PRIORITIES	CON-PRI
CON: AVOIDING	CON-AV
CONFLICT/CONFRONTATION	
CON: MULTIPLE DEMANDS	CON-DEM
CON: HIDING VULNERABILITY	CON-VUL
CON: OTHERS' SELF-INTEREST	CON-OTH
CON: LACK OF STRUCTURES/NORMS	CON-STR
CATEGORY: TACTICS	ABBREVIATION: TAC
TAC: COLLABORATION	TAC-COL
TAC: INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE	TAC-II
TAC: SELF-AWARENESS	TAC-SA
TAC: SELFLESSNESS	TAC-SL
TAC: BALANCE	TAC-BAL
TAC: COMPOSURE	TAC-COMP
TAC: INTEGRITY	TAC-INT
TAC: COURAGEOUS AUTHENTICITY	TAC-CA
CATEGORY: VALUES	ABBREVIATION: VAL
VAL: SUSTENANCE/HEALTH	VAL-HTH
VAL: SAFETY/SECURITY	VAL-SEC
VAL: PEACE/BEAUTY	VAL-PCE
VAL: AUTONOMY	VAL-AUT
VAL: CREATIVITY	VAL-CRE
VAL: MEANING/CONTRIBUTION	VAL-CONT
VAL: EMPATHY	VAL-EMP
VAL: BELONGING	VAL-BEL
CATEGORY: EMOTIONS	ABBREVIATION: EMO
EMO: LOVE	EMO-LV
EMO: ANGER	EMO-ANG
EMO: HURT	EMO-HRT
EMO: SHAME	EMO-SHM
EMO: FEAR	EMO-FEAR

EMO: SELF-DOUBT	EMO-SD
EMO: JOY	EMO-JOY
EMO: OPTIMISM	EMO-OPT
EMO: SADNESS	EMO-SAD
EMO: JEALOUSY	EMO-JEL
EMO: GRATITUDE	EMO-GRAT
EMO: LONELINESS/NEGLECT	EMO-LON
EMO: EXHAUSTION	EMO-EX
CATEGORY: SUBTEXT	ABBREVIATION: SUB
SUB: JUDGMENT	SUB-JMT
SUB: ATTRIBUTION	SUB-ATT
SUB: BLAME	SUB-BLM
SUB: CHARACTERIZATION	SUB-CHAR
SUB: PROBLEM-SOLVING	SUB-PRB

Appendix R

Third Cycle Coding Example

Reflective Journal Entry 01-05-2017

<p>7 a.m. message from (an administrator) begins the day with confusion and irritation¹— “We will all meet at 8:15. Time works for (others involved).” - <i>Um, what??</i> First, I have no idea what this meeting is about,² second, I already have a standing classroom team meeting on my schedule at 8:15.³</p> <p>I scan the trail of messages that are attached to the bottom of this early morning email and discover there has been an ongoing conversation regarding the scheduling of this meeting that I have not been a part of. So much bubbles up to the surface - I’m aggravated by this last minute notice,⁴ by the lack of consideration for my time and my responsibilities⁵ – clearly how I spend my time and whatever meetings I may already have scheduled are unimportant and insignificant.⁶</p> <p>Never mind that it is the first week back to school after a long break, and I have much to catch up on with the individual classroom teams in preparation for the busy month ahead.⁷ Not only do I now have to reach out to the classroom team and with such short notice cancel our meeting, which I hate having to do,⁸ I will also have to somehow magically find some other free time in my jam packed schedule to accomplish the planned conversations with the team.⁹</p> <p>I respond with brevity, hoping my irritation is masked¹⁰ but needing to make the point that I do, in fact, have a scheduled meeting already – as if that shouldn’t already be known, given I provide everyone with a copy of my meetings schedule at the beginning of the year.¹¹ All one would need to do is to consult</p>	<p>¹ EMO-ANG irritation, stress</p> <p>² EMO-LON isolated, left out</p> <p>³ EMO-FEAR; CON-DEM distress, fear of judgment; multiple demands</p> <p>⁴ EMO-ANG aggravation</p> <p>⁵ EMO-LON lack of consideration</p> <p>⁶ SUB-ATT judgment</p> <p>⁷ OBJ-CONT task-accomplishment</p> <p>⁸ EMO-SHM apologetic</p> <p>⁹ EMO-ANG resentful</p> <p>¹⁰ TAC-COMP stress management</p> <p>¹¹ TAC-BAL overworked</p>
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<p>this to see that MY TIME IS NEVER OPEN!!! There isn't a morning or lunch time when I don't have a meeting scheduled, can't you see? No one seems to understand how insanely busy I am, or have any consideration for how limited my time is.¹² Is it even worth mentioning?¹³</p> <p>I offer a response that indicates I'll have to shift things around in order to make myself available,¹⁴ and that the meeting I already had planned was not insignificant or unimportant.¹⁵ What do I get back? - "As you saw the parents are only available tomorrow at 8:15." – <i>Right</i>. Because the parents are the only people who deserve consideration.¹⁶</p>	<p>¹² VAL-EMP consideration</p> <p>¹³ CON-AV avoiding confrontation</p> <p>¹⁴ TAC-CA surfacing issues</p> <p>¹⁵ VAL-EMP consideration</p> <p>¹⁶ CON-PRI conflicting priorities</p>
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[VAL: Empathy/Understanding] > [EMO: Anger; Loneliness, Shame] > [TAC: Composure] > [CON: Avoiding Conflict/Confrontation]

The unmet need for empathy and understanding brings rise to emotions such as irritation, frustration, distress, and isolation. The need to manage the stress caused by these powerful emotions allows maintaining composure to take precedence over other possible strategies, creating an obstacle with the avoidance of confrontation prolonging the issues that prevent me from achieving my objective of accomplishing the task of classroom team meetings. The avoidance of conflict allows the attribution that the other holds little respect for my work to linger.